

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FAMILY STRUCTURE AND  
PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE EDUCATION OF MIDDLE-SCHOOL  
STUDENTS AND THE STUDENTS' SATISFACTION WITH SCHOOL

Jonathon A. Gould

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the degree of  
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Department of Educational Leadership

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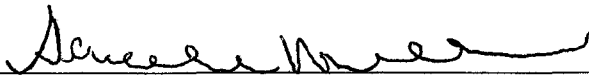
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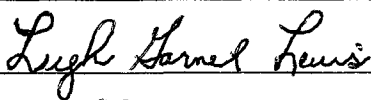
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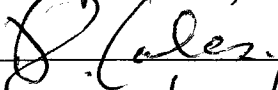


Faculty Member



Faculty Member

Date: May 26, 2009



Dean

Date: 6/24/09

College of Graduate Studies

Committee:

Sarah Marie Marshall, Ph.D., Chair

Leigh Garnet Lewis, Ph.D.

Meechai Orsuwan, Ph.D.

*I Teach Students,  
in Preparation for Life on a Good Day.*

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This is dedicated to my family  
for all of their support  
throughout this project.

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## ABSTRACT

### THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FAMILY STRUCTURE AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE EDUCATION OF MIDDLE-SCHOOL STUDENTS AND THE STUDENTS' SATISFACTION WITH SCHOOL

by Jonathon A. Gould

There is an imminent urgency in public education. The state and federal government increased the requirements necessary for high school graduation. Thus, the challenge for school districts is identifying factors which positively impact levels of student achievement, student satisfaction with school, student connection to school, and the number of students graduating from high school.

This research analyzed the relationship between parental involvement in the education of middle-school students and the student's satisfaction with school. By understanding the impact of the members of the residence of a student, and parental involvement on student satisfaction with school, school districts can develop effective parental-involvement programs to positively impact levels of students' satisfaction with school.

Students at one Midwest middle school completed a survey including 58 questions from the Student Satisfaction Survey (SSS) and an individual data sheet (IDS). The SSS determined student satisfaction with school, while the IDS provided demographic information and levels of satisfaction with parental involvement from participants. Quantitative statistical techniques determined a relationship exists between



parental involvement in the education of middle-school students and the students' satisfaction with school. Additionally, this research found a statistically significant direct relationship between the residence of a student and satisfaction with school-related activities.

A challenge exists for school districts to identify factors which positively impact levels of student achievement, satisfaction with school, student connection to school, and graduation rates. In order to increase the number of students graduating from high school, school districts need to proactively understand which variables positively impact student satisfaction levels with school, and connections to school, for students. Developing programs for parental involvement in middle-school provides support for the development of the skills, knowledge, and connections necessary to be successful at high-school levels.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Parental involvement in education is an important factor in student achievement. According to the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (2004), when parents become involved in the education of their child, a dramatic increase in student grades, test scores, and overall academic outcomes is reported. In addition, student behaviors are described as more positive in nature when parents are involved (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Cotton & Wiklund, 2001; & Lightfoot, 2004). The focus of this dissertation was to examine the relationship between parental involvement in the education of a middle-school student and the satisfaction of the student with school-related activities.

This chapter is separated into several sections. The first overviews the research problem, the purpose of the study, and the research questions. The second identifies the significance of the study, the theoretical constructs, and the research methodology.

#### Background of the Problem

The state and federal government increased the requirements necessary for high school graduation. They also increased the number of high school credits required in all core subject areas, including mathematics, science, language arts, and social studies. In addition to these requirements, public schools are now held accountable for the number of students graduating high school. To address this issue, graduation cohorts are mandated – requiring public schools to graduate a percentage of students every year. Studies suggest increasing the connection to school for students will increase the

number of students who graduate from high school (Kashani, Mehregany, Allen, & Kelly, 1998). One connection to school for students is parental involvement in students' education. Understanding the relationship between parental involvement in the education of middle school students and the students' satisfaction with school-related activities is the focus of this study.

Positive relationships are defined as the interaction between two or more people, promoting the benefits to one or more of the persons involved (Clinton, 1996). Bronfenbrenner (1979) believes the most important thing children need to help them survive in this world is to know someone supports them. Students need to know they have many allies in their education. Within schools, risks are taken, lessons are learned, and education begins. Although research studies pertaining to parental involvement and academic success exist, research is needed surrounding parental involvement in middle-school education and levels of student satisfaction with school-related activities.

In the United States, all children are expected to be educated. Public schools are charged with the task of educating our youth. In recent years, increases of federal and state involvement in public education are recorded. Although most of the involvement is positive, under the Federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, there exists an element of negative consequences for schools not obtaining or surpassing state and federal expectations regarding student achievement.

Children reside at the center of student achievement, and research indicates a relationship between a teacher and a student has a positive effect on the student's perceptions about school, and on the student's achievement levels (Zellman, Waterman, & Eastman, 1997; Baker, Scher, & Mackler, 1998; Kashani, et al., 1998; & Mattingly,



Prislin, McKenzie, Rodriguez, & Kayzar, 2002). One of the objectives, mandated by Congress, in the *Goals 2000: Educate America Act*, is the creation of partnerships between schools and parents. The goals promote the social, emotional, and academic growth of children. The results of these studies state students possessing a positive attitude demonstrate increased levels of self-confidence, self-control, and self-awareness (Epstein, 1996). These qualities, teamed with exposure to positive role models, create a framework for well-rounded thinking processes and effective decision-making.

A critical component of self-confidence in school was illustrated by four research studies, conducted at the middle-school level, spanning the last thirteen years. The first study examines the extent to which parental involvement in a science project affects student satisfaction with a science fair (McDonough, 1995). The study focused on parents helping their student with a science project, and asks questions about student perceptions regarding parents' involvement with the project, feelings students possess regarding the science fair, and levels of help received with homework assigned for the project. The study suggests the student's commitment level for their projects and support shown by parents for the fair connected to students' feelings about their projects. This first study explores the relationship between parental involvement in the education of a middle-school student and student's satisfaction with the school project. Research conducted at the middle-school level is used to create programs at the high-school level, increasing student academic success (Michigan Department of Education, 2003).

The second study examines the relationship between parent involvement and attendance levels (Volkman, 1996). Parental involvement in school activities increases parents' perceptions about classroom procedures and routines, and increases their students' daily attendance. The findings suggest parents' attitudes toward middle school positively change when parents are involved in classroom activities. Between-group comparisons of the attendance records of treatment and control groups indicate a positive effect exists, associating parental involvement in regular classroom lessons with attendance.

The third study examines the relationship between parental involvement in education and factors influencing levels of involvement (Blackfelner & Ranallo, 1998). Data indicates many factors influence parental involvement, including parents' fear of school or embarrassment about their own educational level. Increasing parental involvement is accomplished when students write daily in a parent-reviewed reflective journal, and when parents attend student-parent time during the school day. In addition, parent-teacher conferences also aid in removing parental fear of school settings.

A fourth study investigates the extent to which events happening at school affect levels of parental involvement with homework (Lehman & Repetti, 2007). On days when children report academic or peer problems during the day at school, increases in aversive interactions with their parents are witnessed. This study suggests negative events experienced by children while at school lead to short-term changes in mood and self-esteem – influencing their perceptions of subsequent interactions at home with parents.

These studies offer information about the relationship between parental involvement in middle-school education and student satisfaction with school-related activities. The positive relationship between parental involvement with a school project and student satisfaction about a school fair is illustrated. In addition, the positive relationship between parents' attitudes about school and levels of parental involvement is revealed. Parental fear of school settings is decreased by increased attendance at parent-teacher conferences. Perceptions of parental interactions are influenced by negative events experienced by students at school. Despite the recognition of the positive relationship between parental involvement in education and student achievement (Perlstein, 2003; Wright & Willis, 2004), much remains unknown about the relationship between parental involvement in education and student satisfaction with school. In particular, it is unknown how parental involvement in the education of a middle-school student relates to student satisfaction with school-related activities.

### Problem Statement

Research findings reveal parental involvement in education has a positive effect on student achievement. The academic benefits received from parents investing time into the education of their student is documented, showing a positive relationship between parental involvement in education and student achievement (Henderson & Berla, 1995; Cotton & Wikelund, 2001). However, less is known about the relationship between parental involvement in middle-school education and the satisfaction of the middle-school student with school-related activities. This research study examines the relationship between parental involvement in the education of middle-school students

and the students' satisfaction with school-related activities. In addition, the satisfaction levels of students residing with only their biological parents are compared to students who do not reside with only their biological parents.

Forward thinking teachers and school administrators across the country are creating a range of alternatives to teaching and evaluation methods, by placing a premium on parental involvement in education. One of the objectives mandated by Congress in the *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* is the creation of partnerships between schools and parents to promote the social, emotional, and academic growth of children (National Education Goals Panel, 2000). Herman Melville states, "We cannot live for ourselves alone. Our lives are connected by a thousand invisible threads, and along these sympathetic fibers, our actions run as causes and return to us as results" (as cited in Clinton, 1996, p. 7). This statement speaks to the need to reinforce lines of communication between schools and homes, and the importance of fostering positive attitudes for students about school. Students who possess positive attitudes are better equipped to embrace change in their personal and academic lives (Epstein, 1996). Students' attitudes are fragile and subject to change. When a family structure changes, due to the divorce or death of parents, students are placed into a transitional state of life. The support system for the student in transition, primarily parents and step-parents, impacts how the student will adapt to her or his new surroundings.

Children bear the brunt of social transitions, defined as the movement from one place or level of society to another (Epstein, 1996). The instability of American households poses great risks to the healthy development of children. The concept of a village is described in the work of former First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton in her

book entitled, *"It Takes Village, and Other Lessons"* (Clinton, 1996). Members of this village include parents, grandparents, extended family members, members of the community, and teachers. The impact of a strong connection between school and home on a student should not be minimized. Although adolescence is a time of dramatic change, maintaining open communication lines between parents, step-parents, and teens is important for the child to feel supported and loved. It is within these open lines of communication that relationships are formed and positive results are seen, both personally and academically (Kashani, et al., 1998). These results also lend themselves to the need for schools to enhance the skills to complete four years of intensive academic rigor and obtain a high-school diploma.

### Conceptual Framework

The Ecological Systems Theory, developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979) was used as the conceptual framework for this study. Bronfenbrenner developed the Ecological Systems Theory to explain how events shaping a child's environment affect how the child develops. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), everything in a child's environment affects how a child grows and thinks. The levels of influence in a child's environment are called the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem, and the macrosystem. The benefits of using this framework includes multiple vantage points to observe the findings, multiple lenses to view the study through, and multiple cultural aspects to consider at the onset of the study. This framework embraces connections between school and home, and facilitates conversation surrounding the need to increase lines of communication between the two. This framework also reinforces the need to

educate students, not in seclusion, but in a sea of educational allies – especially those labeled as either parent or step-parent. This theory is explained in more depth in chapter two.

### Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between parental involvement in the education of middle-school students and the students' satisfaction with school-related activities, and to determine if a difference in satisfaction levels existed between students who resided with only their biological parents and those who did not. The Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) served as the theoretical framework. The independent variable was parental involvement in the education of middle-school students. The dependent variable was the satisfaction of students with school. Student age at the middle-school level of public education was controlled.

### Research Questions

- 1) Is there a difference in student satisfaction with school of students residing with only biological parents and those not residing with only biological parents?
- 2) What is the relationship between parental involvement in education and student satisfaction with school-related activities?

### Research Hypotheses

- H<sub>1</sub>: There is a difference in student satisfaction with school of students residing with only biological parents and those not residing with only biological parents?
- H<sub>2</sub>: There is a relationship between parental involvement in education and student satisfaction with school-related activities.

### Null Hypotheses

- H<sub>01</sub>: There is no difference in student satisfaction with school of students residing with only biological parents and those not residing with only biological parents?
- H<sub>02</sub>: There is no relationship between parental involvement in education and student satisfaction with school-related activities?

### Significance of the Study

This study illustrates the relationship between parental involvement in the education of a middle-school student and the satisfaction of the student with school-related activities. This study informs parents regarding how parental involvement in the education of a middle-school student relates to the satisfaction of the student with school. Additionally, this study helps fill the gap in the literature regarding relationships between school and home by providing quantitative data addressing the relationship between parental involvement in education and student satisfaction with school. Increased knowledge of the relationship between parental involvement in the education of a middle-school student and student satisfaction with school increases parents'

abilities to invest their time in ways students welcome. In addition, it is unknown how student satisfaction with school is impacted by the grade level, gender, or cultural background of the student.

This study offers insights for parents and school personnel about the relationship between parental involvement in the education of a middle-school student and the satisfaction of the student with school. With the findings from this study, school personnel may better address issues pertaining to academic achievement, student satisfaction with school, school attendance problems, and parental involvement. These results may assist in the creation of educational programs to increase parental involvement. Second, while prior research provides information on the effect of parental involvement in education on student achievement, the results of this study helps fill the void in the literature – providing quantitative data regarding the relationship between parental involvement in the education of a middle-school student and the satisfaction of the student with school-related activities. Third, this research project focuses on parental involvement in the education of middle-school students because middle-school is described as an extremely formative time in the life of a student (Hart & Risley, 1995; Jeynes, 2005). The need for increased research on middle-school students is warranted.

This research project extends the knowledge about parental involvement and its effect on academic achievement, and creates new knowledge regarding the relationship between parental involvement in middle-school education and student satisfaction with school. Stakeholders in education may benefit from an increased awareness of the influence on student satisfaction with school, as will anyone raising a child.



A clear understanding of the relationship between parental involvement in education and student satisfaction with school fosters the collaboration and connections needed between parents and students. Defining helpful or productive levels of parental involvement in education, for any adult charged with the task of raising an adolescent, potentially increases the lines of communication between school and home.

#### Definition of Terms

- 1) Achievement is the ability to carry out to a successful end; to accomplish (Thorndike & Barnhart, 1979). Academic achievement describes students obtaining passing grades in all classes or membership in an after-school activity.
- 2) Attitude is a way of thinking, acting, or feeling (Thorndike & Barnhart, 1979). Attitude describes how a student thinks, acts or feels about school.
- 3) Father is a male parent (Thorndike & Barnhart, 1979). Father means specifically the biological male parent of a student.
- 4) Middle-school is a place for teaching and learning, traditionally for grades six through eight (Thorndike & Barnhart, 1979). Middle-school describes the grades levels six through eight housed in a single school building or complex.
- 5) Mother is a female parent (Thorndike & Barnhart, 1979). Mother means specifically the biological female parent of a student.
- 6) Parent is a father or mother; source of life (Thorndike & Barnhart, 1979). Parent describes any adult charged with the task of raising a child.

- 7) Stakeholder is a person with something to gain or lose; a person with an interest or share in something (Thorndike & Barnhart, 1979). Stakeholder describes any person affected by decisions made surrounding the education of a student.
- 8) Step-father is a man who has married one's mother after the death or divorce of one's father (Thorndike & Barnhart, 1979). Step-father describes any man married to or living with the mother of a student.
- 9) Step-mother is a woman who has married one's father after the death or divorce of one's mother (Thorndike & Barnhart, 1979). Step-mother describes any woman married to or living with the father of a student.
- 10) Student is a person who is studying in school, college, or university (Thorndike & Barnhart, 1979). Student describes a child enrolled in school – specifically in grades six through eight.
- 11) Success is a favorable result; wished for ending; good fortune (Thorndike & Barnhart, 1979). Success describes obtaining passing grades in classes or membership in an afterschool activity.
- 12) Superintendent is a person who oversees, directs, or manages (Thorndike & Barnhart, 1979). Superintendent describes a person who oversees the daily functions of a school district.
- 13) Teacher is a person who teaches in a school (Thorndike & Barnhart, 1979). Teacher describes any adult teaching a specific class in which the student is a member.

### Assumptions

The research study was based on the following assumptions. The first assumption was parents care about the education of their children. The second assumption was students care about the education they receive. A third assumption was students answered the survey questions honestly and accurately.

### Delimitations

The delimitations imposed on the study by the researcher included the population studied, the setting of the study, and the duration of time in which to complete the study. The population was 815 middle-school students in grades six, seven and eight in one urban school in the Midwest. The ethnicity of the students was approximately 90% White, 4% Hispanic, 2% African-American, 2% Asian-Americans, and 2% Multi-Racial. This aligned closely with the schools reported ethnicity of 93% White students, 3% Hispanic Students, 1% African-American students and 3% Multi-Racial Students (Great Schools, 2008). The choice to use one school was deliberately imposed by the researcher to facilitate data collection in a short period of time.

### Limitations

The limitations of the study, which could not be controlled by the researcher, included the number of the students responding to the survey or the level of honesty the students used to complete the survey. Other conditions restricting the study included the cultural diversity of the students and the socio-economic status of the community.

## Overview of Literature Review and Theoretical Constructs

The review of the literature supported the need for this study in many ways. The literature review addressed three main themes. The first theme addressed the role of biological parents in the education of students. The second explored the role of step-parents in the education of students. The third theme explored student satisfaction with school-related issues. The themes reflected in the literature review addressed student satisfaction impacted by varying levels of involvement with education from biological parents and step-parents. Although a fair amount of research emphasized the need for parental involvement in middle-school education and its effect on student achievement, less was known about its impact on student satisfaction with school-related activities.

## Overview of Methodology

This study was a quantitative, correlational study, employing a survey design. The study involved a survey administered to 100 middle-school students at one Midwestern school. Permission was obtained in advance from the parents and the principal of the school in which the survey was administered. Data was collected, analyzed, and findings will be made public in the final presentation of this dissertation.

## Overview of Document

This dissertation is organized around five chapters. The first chapter includes the introduction to the study. The second chapter showcases the review of the relevant literature. The third chapter describes the methodology including participant selection, instrumentation, validity and reliability, data collection procedures and data analysis. The fourth chapter presents the research findings. The fifth chapter includes the

discussion of the findings, implications for policy and practice, and suggestions for future research.

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between parental involvement in the education of middle-school students and the students' satisfaction with school-related activities, and to determine if a difference in satisfaction levels existed between students who resided with only their biological parents and those who did not. The Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) served as the theoretical framework. The independent variable was parental involvement in the education of middle-school students. The dependent variable was the satisfaction of students with school. Student age at the middle-school level of public education was controlled.

The literature review focused on: (1) the history of public education in the United States, (2) the roles of biological parents in the education of students, (3) the roles of step-parents in the education of students, and (4) student satisfaction with school. The history of public education in the United States was reviewed, along with the roles of parents in the education of their student. Specific emphasis on the role of the mother, the role of the father, and the effect their involvement in education has on academic achievement was examined. The roles of step-parents in the education of students were also reviewed. Lastly, student satisfaction with school-related activities was analyzed.

## History of Public Education in the United States

Formal education in the United States began in the 19th century (Butts, 1978).

Thomas Jefferson was the first American leader to suggest the creation of a public school system. His ideas formed the basis of education systems developed in the 19th century (Collins, Dupuis, & Johansen, 1985). Originally, the purpose of education was to teach religion to students. However, the influx of people from many countries and belonging to different faiths led to a weakening of the concept. People refused to learn only in English and opposed the clergy imposing their religious views through public education (Collins, Dupuis, & Johansen, 1985). Jefferson believed education should be under the control of the government, free from religious biases, and available to all people – irrespective of their status in society (Butts, 1978).

Until the 1840's, the education system was localized and available only to wealthy people. The common-school reformers argued for a public education system on the belief schooling for all could create good citizens, unite society, and prevent crime and poverty. As a result of their efforts, free public education at the elementary level was available for all American children by the end of the 19th century. Massachusetts passed the first compulsory school attendance laws in 1852, followed by New York in 1853. By 1918 all states passed laws requiring children to be educated (Collins, Dupuis, & Johansen, 1985).

More than 150 years have passed since Massachusetts established a state-wide system of education, leading to the requirement for all children's attendance at a public school. Today, every state requires children to enroll in public or private education or to

be home-schooled (McNeil, 2008). However, compulsory education laws vary greatly from state to state. While some states use a student's date of birth to determine the beginning and ending dates for compulsory education, other states require a student to begin school if he or she will turn 6 during the school year and require a student to remain in school until completion of the school year in which he or she turns 17. Most states offer parents the ability to petition their local school board for a waiver of these requirements under documented circumstances, such as enrollment in a vocational education program, or early completion of required coursework (McNeil, 2008).

### The Roles of Biological Parents in the Education of Students

Biological parents are birthparents or natural parents – the man and woman who conceive a child – also known as genetic parents (Thorndike & Barnhart, 1979).

Biological parents typically raise their own children, to some degree. Raising a child in the United States involves educating the child (Epstein, 1996). The roles of biological parents, in the education of their student, impact student achievement, student satisfaction with school, and success at school within the United States, and around the world (Collins, Dupuis, & Johansen, 1985).

### *Parental Involvement in the Education of Their Student*

Parents and teachers agree increasing parental involvement makes a significant difference in student performance. One study, conducted in 1999, reports 69% of teachers surveyed believe most parents need to get more involved in their children's education, and 71% of parents wish they could do more (Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 2004). Factors exist affecting levels of parental



involvement in the education of their student. Three of the major factors are: (1) parents' beliefs about what is important, necessary and permissible for them to do with and on behalf of their children; (2) the extent to which parents believe they can have a positive influence on their children's education; and (3) parents' perceptions that their children and school want them to be involved (Michigan Department of Education, 2003).

Parental involvement in school rose significantly between 1999 and 2003. Parental involvement was measured by documented attendance at school-related meetings, meetings with teachers, and/or by volunteering or serving on committees. In 2003, over 88% of students in kindergarten through twelfth grade had parents who attended general-school meetings, compared with 78% in 1999. 77% of students had parents who attended scheduled meetings with teachers, 70% had parents who attended school events, and 42% of students had parents who volunteered in school or served on committees in 2003. This compared with 73%, 65%, and 37%, respectively, in 1999. Increased focus on academics drives governmental bodies to mandate programs for schools to implement, focusing on parental involvement with school-related activities (Michigan Department of Education, 2003).

Although educators are charged with the task of educating our youth, they are not expected to do so in isolation. The mission to obtain, maintain, and surpass goals created by governmental bodies is best described as a journey, with many passengers making the trip. The rich discourse during this journey takes into account the needs of the all passengers, especially the younger ones. A 1998 study on motivating forces for students, describe students in need of attention from parents (Kashani, et al., 1998).

When parents take the time to focus on the characteristics of their child, the child feels loved. When parents take the time to emphasize the accomplishments of their child, the child feels more secure. Children feel respected by parents when parents take the time to listen to their stories about their day, or when they are allowed to express their opinions (Kashani, et al., 1998).

Elkind's study (2001) on parent-child relations addresses children's feelings, finding politeness exhibited to children is very important, and may do as much for improving parent-child relations as many of the more elaborate parental strategies. Elkind proposes training for parents – with emphasis on inquiring about their student's school-related activities – by showing respect for their students and using listening strategies. The respect shown by parents to students creates measurable increases in communication instruments utilized by schools, such as student planners for the recording of assignments or questions by students for parents to review. The increased communication levels between parents and teachers communicating through the student's planner create increases in student academic outcomes. Student academic outcomes include quiz and/or test scores, and the number of homework assignments submitted on time (Elkind, 2001).

A 1987 study on students' interests details how parents who take the time to show interest in the education of their student reap the benefits, and peace of mind of knowing, they have done their part in helping to ensure a successful academic career for their student (McLaughlin & Shields, 1987). Epstein's research (1996) on parenting practices, associated with positive student outcomes, describes outlets for parents who desire increased involvement with the educational setting of their student's school.

Findings reveal the outlets of attending parent-teacher conferences, participation in school events, and academic assistance with homework were the most popular forms of parental investment of time with their student. Epstein notes as student outcomes increase, the education of students flourish, and academic achievement becomes measurable (Epstein, 1996).

### *Parental Involvement and Student Achievement*

The *No Child Left Behind Act*, signed into law January 2002, aims to ensure all children achieve academic proficiency and gain the educational skills necessary to succeed in life. The law mandates parents must be informed on how they can be involved in school improvement efforts, and must be provided with local report cards of schools in their district. Schools are required to disseminate literature on effective parent involvement, and schools receiving Title I funding must possess written policies, offer annual meetings, and provide training on parental involvement. The policies are re-evaluated and revised as needed (Michigan Department of Education, 2003).

Reeder & Sowers' study (2002) on family literacy discusses the importance of family literacy – highlighting daily reading at home and its connection to student academic achievement. Parents who read to their middle-school student, or when a middle-school student reads to his or her parents, encourage the need for families to communicate on a daily basis (Reeder & Sowers, 2002). Parental involvement in education takes place privately in student homes, and publicly with additional support from school personnel.

A 1995 study, focusing on a comprehensive approach to educating students, finds increased levels of academic achievement for students when parents and teachers communicate on a weekly basis regarding the completion of homework, grades received, or effort applied in the classroom (Henderson & Berla, 1995). In addition to increased levels of academic achievement, student satisfaction with homework assignments is perceived as more positive when parents and teachers communicate regularly. Steinberg's research (1996) on indicators of success finds attendance by parents at parent-teacher conferences correlates positively with the academic achievement of their student (Steinberg, 1996). In addition, participation of parents with school events, after-school programs, and extracurricular activities correlates positively with the academic achievement of their student. Additionally, Steinberg's research reveals a positive relationship between school-related success and student emotions. A second study by Griffin (1996), on the emotional and physical involvements of parents in the education of their student, illustrates parental involvement in education is positively related to student outcomes (Griffin, 1996). Again, this physical investment of time, made by parents towards their student's education, benefits long-term academic achievement, forges partnerships between the home-life and school-life of a student, and adds to student success at school.

Blackfelner & Ranallo's study (1998) on relationships between student's academic success and parental involvement with their student's study habits illustrates parents are an important ingredient in the recipe for a student's success in school. Research demonstrates how parent involvement has many benefits for students. Documentation of academic achievement in the classroom is made visible through

anecdotal records and teacher observations. A positive change in parents' attitudes toward school is observed when parents volunteer in school-related activities (Blackfelner & Ranallo, 1998). Further research into student's levels of self esteem, fostered by parents who intentionally invest time in their student's education, is revealed (Kashani, et al., 1998). Approval and acceptance are the foundation of self esteem and self concept. "Parents have the earliest influence on the development of a child's opinion of himself, and they need to express love and offer praise" (Kashani, et al., 1998, p. 29). Increased levels of student self-esteem, received from involved parents are illustrated, and opportunities for mothers and fathers to involve themselves in the education of their student are available.

#### *The Role of a Mother in the Education of Her Student*

Kindlon & Thompson's (2000) research on the relationship between a mother and her children, describes how most children have an innate sense of understanding of the level of involvement a mother possesses, with a specific level of connectedness existing between children and their mother. When mothers invest their time into the education of their students, student achievement increases (Lightfoot, 2004). In addition to an investment of time, Lightfoot's research reveals students need attention from their mothers to feel safe and secure. Lightfoot also explores how attention invested in a child's education positively impacts student achievement, student self-esteem, and student self-concept. Wright & Willis (2004) believe when a mother invests energy into the education of her children, academic achievement is enhanced. When an investment of time from mothers is missing, students struggle with self-concept (Wright & Willis,

2004). Findings indicate mothers are more involved than fathers in parenting their adolescent children, and teenagers report being more securely attached to their mothers (Kelly & Kelly, 2005). The involvement of a mother in the education of her children increases academic achievement, a feeling of safety for the child, and improves student self-esteem.

#### *The Role of a Father in the Education of His Student*

LeMenestrel's (1999) study, on relationships between fathers and their children, explains how children benefit from positive relationships with their fathers, and how a father's involvement affects a child's social, cognitive, and academic development. LeMenestrel reveals a philosophy of ownership and accountability for fathers who help raise their children when they offer positive feelings for their students. Kindlon and Thompson (2000) find, in the absence of a mother, the father becomes a suitable surrogate. When an emotional void between a father and his son exists, it becomes damaging to a boy because of the central role a father figure plays in a boy's developing view of himself. For many sons, the emotional distance between them and their fathers remains a lifelong source of sadness, anger, bitterness, or shame (Kindlon & Thompson, 2000). Children undergo enormous pressures while trying to succeed in school, become accepted by their peer group, and please their parents. Involvement of fathers in the education of their children positively impacts student levels of subject comprehension. In addition to enhanced comprehension, academic achievement levels are also increased by the involvement of fathers in education. Unfortunately, the physical absence of a

father in his child's home negatively impacts his level of involvement in raising his child.

A study by Kelly & Kelly (2005) on non-residential fathers indicates nonresidential fathers are found to be significantly less involved in parenting than fathers who live at home. In addition, adolescents not living with their fathers report feeling less paternal attachment than adolescents who live with their fathers. A negative impact on academic achievement is reported when fathers are not involved in the education of their student (Kelly & Kelly, 2005).

The roles of biological parents, in the education of their student, impact student achievement and student satisfaction with, and success at, school. Research reveals positive implications for students' academic achievement and self-concept when parents involve themselves in the education of their children. Studies show negative implications for students' success at school and student's self-esteem when parents are not involved in the education of their student.

### The Roles of Step-parents in the Education of Students

The divorce rate, and the tendency of divorced persons to remarry or cohabitate with another adult, has increased a child's chances of living with step-parents (Wallerstein & Blakeslee, 1996). In the beginning of the twentieth century, there were only three divorces for every 1,000 marriages. The divorce rate in the United States continues to rapidly increase, negatively affecting adults and children. Minsuk, Felner, & Shim, (2004) reported half of all marriages are likely to end in divorce, based on projections of current divorce rates. Fagan & Rector (2000) reveal students' academic

achievements are negatively impacted by divorce. As the divorce rate continues to increase each year, student behaviors in school will change (Fagan & Rector, 2000). A 2006 study provides step-parents insight into how divorce impacts the education of the students living in their home. Positive results are observed when step-parents invest time in helping their stepchildren with homework (Kindlon, 2006).

A second study, conducted by the National Survey of Children (Clinton, 1996), following the lives of a group of sixth through eighth graders for more than a decade, finds many adults claim divorce is beneficial – unfortunately most children do not. Jeynes (2005) examines the relationship between parental family structure, especially parent divorce and/or remarriage, and its negative effect on the academic achievement of children. Jeynes reports children from non-intact families face their own set of unique circumstances when dealing with educators and parents. The examination of the relationship between family structures and student achievement illustrates an increased level of student apprehension and anxiety towards the completion of homework and the taking of tests. Song (2002) examines Korean Americans who are adjusting to divorce, and explores Korean cultural issues affecting school-work with Korean American families. As Song (2002) stated:

Effective interventions include consideration of issues related to culturally-based shame, Eastern perspectives regarding the limits of self-disclosure, a hierarchical social structure, the acculturation process, and linguistic differences. Drawing on Koreans' preferences for group identity and desire for their children to reach high levels of educational achievement, implications for treatment in school, church, and community settings are explored. Finally, a treatment model is presented that integrates family therapy and identification with an extended family, to address these issues in a multiple-family group format, designed to facilitate a post-divorce adjustment and effective single-parenting. (Song, 2002, p. 39)



Similarly, Colpin, Vandemeulebroecke, & Ghesquiere (2004) describe the experiences and needs of students among parents in divorced parents and stepfamilies. Their research illustrates a variety of needs required to support post-divorce families. Key findings include the need for a respectful attitude towards step-parents from the school and a flexible way of handling the diversity of family situations, as essential tools in supporting children and promoting involvement with education from step-parents. Children of divorce are described as those who are left in the aftermath of a myriad of decisions to make, with life-changing consequences experienced in the beginning (Colpin, et al., 2004).

Research reveals the addition of step-parents in the families of students adds confusion for students about the adult's roles in their education. Step-parents are also confused about their role in the education of their stepchildren. Findings indicate step-parents can positively affect students' academic achievement if they assist with homework and exhibit respectful attitudes towards students living in their home. Other expectations regarding the roles of step-parents in the educational setting of students living in their home are not as clearly understood.

## Student Satisfaction with School

### *Academic Accomplishments*

Academic accomplishments, such as Oregon's *Closing the Achievement Gap* award (Rourke & Boone, 2008), showcases student talent, and academic rigor. Performance scores on comprehensive tests (Beal, 1997) illustrate pathways for schools holding students accountable for in-class assignments and testing. School-related

activities increase student rapport (Brent, 2005), offering outlets for students to connect to one-another. Maintaining student discipline cultivates classrooms conducive to learning (Steel, 2005). Offering decision-making opportunities at school increases student autonomy and communication levels with teachers (Stefanou, 2004). Effective communication emphasizes the impact of creating a safe and secure learning environment, while reinforcing a positive and nurturing school climate.

### *Satisfaction with School*

Lee and Bowen (2006) find student satisfaction with school is illustrated in student work, connections with peers, and communication with school staff. Addressing students' satisfaction levels enables schools to remain fluid during changing trends in society, and facilitates effective communication between students, schools, and the home of a student. Additionally, Lee and Bowen reveal an understanding of the relationship between the satisfaction levels of students with school, and parents' or step-parents' involvement in their education, increases student satisfaction with school. Their findings also show an increase in student satisfaction by the completion of in-class assignments correlates positively with communication with teachers (2006).

Student satisfaction with school-related issues facilitates increased academic achievement, and student self-concept. Increases in student autonomy, decision-making abilities, and rapport with peers is observed when students feel accepted, safe, and satisfied with their school. Bronfenbrenner (1979) reveals how the environment of the school impacts the satisfaction of the student with school.

### *The Student Satisfaction Survey*

Student satisfaction with school increases student achievement, student self-esteem, and levels of communication with school personnel. According to the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP, 2007), research reveals the satisfaction students possess with school varies from one location to another. To create a measure for student satisfaction with school, the Student Satisfaction Survey (SSS) was developed in 1985 by Neal Schmitt and Brian Loher for the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) at the University of Michigan (NASSP, 2007, Appendix E). Student satisfaction is measured through several vessels including satisfaction with teachers, students, homework, activities, discipline, decision-making opportunities, and communication. Students express satisfaction from academic accomplishments, connections with peers, communication with teachers and teacher-praise, award recognition, and task accomplishments.

A study conducted by Gordon (1997) using the SSS revealed the implementation of block scheduling for 163 Missouri high schools because of decisions made from data obtained from the SSS. Students enrolled in traditionally-scheduled schools expressed greater levels of satisfaction with school on two subscales of the SSS. A post-study analysis of the impact of school size on the variables of the study revealed school enrollment was a factor influencing the results.

A second study to use the Student Satisfaction Survey was conducted by Lumpa (1997) for elementary and middle-school levels of student satisfaction with school. Significant correlational relationships were found between satisfaction with

communication and satisfaction with teachers. No significant difference was found between elementary and middle-school students for satisfaction with school.

A third study to use the Student Satisfaction Survey was conducted by Wooderson (1998), reporting the SSS as a reliable and valid instrument. The study revealed how students assigned to interdisciplinary-inclusion teams tended to have a more positive perception of school than did students on the non-inclusion-interdisciplinary teams. Findings showed mixed results, with minimal differences in achievement and observed differences with satisfaction with school. This was also the last documented use of the Student Satisfaction Survey.

#### Theoretical Foundation – The Ecological Systems Theory

Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979) developed The Ecological Systems Theory to explain how events shaping a child's environment affect how the child grows and develops. According to Bronfenbrenner, everything in a child's environment affects how a child develops and thinks. The levels of influence in a child's environment are called the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem, and the macrosystem. Parents possessing an understanding of how their involvement in the education of a middle-school student relates to the student's satisfaction with school, coupled with interactions between other family members, are able to make informed decisions about their student's success at school (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

#### *The Microsystem*

The microsystem is the small, immediate environment the child lives in. Children's microsystems include the immediate relationships or organizations they

interact with, such as their immediate family or caregivers. The manner in which these groups or organizations interact with the child affects how the child grows. Encouraging and nurturing relationships facilitates the growth of the child. Furthermore, how a child acts or reacts to these people in the microsystem will affect how they treat the child in return. Each child's special genetic and biologically-influenced personality traits affect how others treat her or him. In the microsystem, it is crucial for the home environment to be conducive to the intellectual growth of the child. The microsystem is the environment closest to the child, and therefore has the greatest impact. The microsystem is impacted by the mesosystem – the next level in the Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

### *The Mesosystem*

The mesosystem describes the interactions between the student's family members, teachers, and other school personnel. It is within these interactions and conversations a common thread exists surrounding the thought processes, feelings, satisfaction, and intellectual development of the student. Development occurs through the process of progressively more complex exchanges between a child and somebody else – especially somebody who cares for the child. National policies encourage every school to foster partnerships to increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional, and academic growth of children (National Education Goals Panel, 2000). Parental partnerships with education show dramatic improvements with student academic achievement. Parental involvement with education not only happens within the confines of the school building, but also happens within the family's

home, and during times of social interaction between different members with the peer group of the child. Connections made between school and home, found within the mesosystem, have a dramatic effect on student achievement (Epstein, 1996). Some of the connections are indirect – found in the next level, and known as the exosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

### *The Exosystem*

The exosystem includes the other people and places with which the child has indirect relationships, such as their parents' employers or extended family members. When the workplace of the parent values the time needed to be invested into the life of their employees' family, everyone benefits – especially the children. The connections of the child, the family of the child, and the outer levels of influence upon the child, to the culture and society in which the child is a part, is the beginning description of Bronfenbrenner's final level, known as the macrosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

### *The Macrosystem*

Bronfenbrenner's final level is the macrosystem, which is the largest and most remote set of people and things to a child but which still has a great influence over the child. The macrosystem includes things such as the relative freedoms permitted by the national government, cultural values, the economy, etc. These variables affect a child either positively or negatively (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

The Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) explains how the events shaping a child's environment affect how the child grows and develops. Parents who possess an understanding of how their involvement in the education of their middle-

school student, impacts their student's satisfaction with school, are better equipped to prepare their student for academic success. The theoretical framework provides an outlet for the conversations, interactions, and implications to student satisfaction with school. In addition, the framework acts as a platform for continued research into the area of factors affecting both academic success and student achievement in school. As Clinton (1996) stated:

You will find successes and failures among parents, who do the work of staying home with their kids and among those who leave home to go to work. What makes the difference is whether parents have the competence and commitment to give children what they need for healthy development. (p. 210)

The Ecological Systems Theory explains how events shape a child's environment, and how they affect both the growth and development of a student. The effects of the environment on students' comprehension of their surroundings impact their education, self-esteem, and self-respect. Parents who understand the implications of their involvement in their student's education are able to make informed decisions about, and contributions for, their student's success at school (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

### Conclusion

Parental involvement is an important factor in student achievement. Studies show student behaviors are positively affected when parents are involved in the education of their student (Cotton & Wikelund, 2001; Trotman, 2001; & Desimone, 2002). Research indicates positive relationships exist between parents' and step-parents' involvement with homework and student academic achievement. Findings also indicate respect shown by parents and step-parents correlates positively with communication levels between the school and home of a student. Although a plethora of information

about the effect of parental involvement on student achievement regarding homework, and the relationship between respect exhibited by adults and communication levels between school and home exists (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Epstein, 1996; & Mattingly et al., 2002), a gap in the research surrounding parental involvement in education and its influence on student satisfaction with school has provided clear reasoning for the need to complete this research project. An increased level of understanding is needed about the different types of parental involvement in education and their effect on student satisfaction with school. This knowledge will offer insight into connections which can possibly be made between parental involvement in education, student satisfaction with school, student achievement, and academic success.

### The Conceptual Model

The conceptual model (Appendix A) for the Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) is symbolized by the concentric circles at the center of the model. The inner-most circle illustrates two of the most basic human needs – the need to feel both loved and accepted. The attitude of the student begins to form in this level. The second-larger circle symbolizes the microsystem, and represents the closest level of influence on a child – the immediate family member and caregivers. Parental involvement with the education of a middle-school student and student satisfaction with school begins in the next level, known as the mesosystem. The third-larger circle symbolizes the mesosystem, and represents interactions between each family member, and their interactions with school. The next-larger circle symbolizes the exosystem, and represents an indirect level of influence on a middle-school student – the extended



family members and the workplace of the parents. The largest circle symbolizes the macrosystem, and represents the society and culture in which the child is a member (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

#### Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between parental involvement in the education of middle-school students and the students' satisfaction with school-related activities, and to determine if a difference in satisfaction levels existed between students who resided with only their biological parents and those who did not. The Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) served as the theoretical framework. The independent variable was parental involvement in the education of middle-school students. The dependent variable was the satisfaction of students with school. Student age at the middle-school level of public education was controlled.

This chapter includes an overview of the methodology and research design. The population and sample are then described followed by the instrumentation, data-collection procedures, and data analysis.

#### Research Questions

- 1) Is there a difference in student satisfaction with school of students residing with only biological parents and those not residing with only biological parents?
- 2) What is the relationship between parental involvement in education and student satisfaction with school-related activities?

### Research Hypotheses

- H<sub>1</sub>: There is a difference in student satisfaction with school of students residing with only biological parents and those not residing with only biological parents?
- H<sub>2</sub>: There is a relationship between parental involvement in education and student satisfaction with school-related activities.

### Null Hypotheses

- H<sub>01</sub>: There is no difference in student satisfaction with school of students residing with only biological parents and those not residing with only biological parents?
- H<sub>02</sub>: There is no relationship between parental involvement in education and student satisfaction with school-related activities?

### Research Design

Quantitative research methods typically involve structured questions, developed categories and variables, and summarize large amounts of data, in a convenient summary evaluation (Slavin, 1992; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). Quantitative research is appropriate when studying a specific issue with measurable responses (Pedhazur, 1997; Wiersma, 2000). Quantitative research methods address the correlation between two or more variables. Quantitative methods foster the ability to reach large populations for sampling, in a timely manner, and are typically less labor intensive to collect data or train researchers (Nardi, 2006). This study was quantitative and used a survey design to

examine the potential relationship between two variables – parental involvement in the education of middle-school students and the students’ satisfaction with school. The use of a quantitative design was appropriate for this study because of its ability to gather large amounts of data, in a short period of time, while protecting respondent anonymity.

Correlational research investigates the possibility of a relationship between two or more variables (Slavin, 1992; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006, & Nardi, 2006). A correlation exists between two quantitative variables when the scores within a certain range on one variable are associated with the scores within a certain range on another quantitative variable (Wiersma, 2000). Correlational research is also known as associational research, because the relationships are studied without influence on either variable (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). The benefits to using correlational research include clarification of the potential relationship between the variables (Slavin, 1992). The range for the correlation coefficient is between positive one and negative one. If high scores on one quantitative variable are associated with high scores on another quantitative variable, a positive correlation exists. If high scores on one quantitative variable are associated with low scores on another quantitative variable, a negative correlation exists (Slavin, 1992). In addition, correlational research allows for predictions to be made on the score of one variable if the score on another variable is known (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). Correlational research, employing a survey design, was used for this study – examining the potential relationship between two variables – parental involvement in the education of middle-school students and the students’ satisfaction with school. The use of correlational research was appropriate for this study

because of its ability to compare two groups of respondents, without attempting to influence either group.

Survey research is a quantitative method in which researchers administer a survey to a sample of the population in order to describe attitudes, opinions, behaviors, or characteristics of the population. Surveys yield empirical results to collect and analyze the data necessary to answer the research questions (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). Survey research gathers information related to the purpose of a research project (Wiersma, 2000). One justification, for the use of a survey, is the efficient use of time in data collection. Another justification is the ability to reach large populations. However, the researcher must be cognizant of the lack of generalizability to the entire population, due to the lack of a random selection of members from the larger population (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006; Nardi, 2006). Advantages to using a survey include a less costly approach to reach large populations for sampling, it is less labor intensive to collect data, and the costs associated with the training of researchers is reduced (Nardi, 2006). Survey research was the appropriate method to collect the data needed for this study. The use of a survey allows one to efficiently obtain large amounts of information from students while protecting their anonymity.

### Population and Sample

The sample included students at one Midwest middle school. Participants included students in grades six, seven, and eight. The ethnicity of the students was 90% White, 4% Hispanic, 2% African-American, 2% Asian-American, and 2% Multi-Racial. A total of 815 students were enrolled in grades six through eight in the selected school.

To accrue a sample estimate of at least plus or minus 5%, with a 95% level of confidence, a sample of 100 students were surveyed (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). The sample for this research was gathered using a non-probability sampling technique, known as convenience sampling. A total of 23 students from the sixth-grade level, 53 students from the seventh-grade level, and 24 students from the eighth-grade level were surveyed, from seven different Students Achieving More (SAM) classrooms. The benefits to surveying students from this setting was that it was a representative sample of the general population – the students were randomly assigned to classrooms at the beginning of the school year, the classroom contained students from all ability levels, and possessed similar numbers of both boys and girls. Two sixth-grade SAM classrooms, three seventh-grade SAM classrooms, and two eighth-grade SAM classrooms were surveyed. An additional seventh-grade SAM classroom was included to more accurately represent the overall population – one with an increased number of seventh-grade students.

### Instrumentation

The Student Satisfaction Survey (SSS) (Appendix E) was administered, after permission to use the instrument, and add global questions addressing overall satisfaction with school, was granted from the controller at the NASSP. The instrument was developed in 1985 by Neal Schmitt and Brian Loher for the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) at the University of Michigan (NASSP, 2007). This survey measures satisfaction levels of students with school. The instrument underwent a national norming study in 1985 in 35 public schools. The SSS instrument

measures student satisfaction for nine subscales consisting of satisfaction with teachers; satisfaction with fellow students; satisfaction with school work; satisfaction with student activities; satisfaction with student discipline; satisfaction with decision-making opportunities; satisfaction with school buildings, supplies, and upkeep; satisfaction with school-related communication; and statements regarding parental involvement (NASSP, 2007). In addition, an individual data sheet was used to collect information on student grade level, gender, and race.

The SSS asks questions, employing a six-response Likert scale. Items receive score values of “1” (Very Unhappy) to “5” (Very Happy). Items marked with a “6” indicate a student has no opinion or does not know how to respond to the statement in the survey. The instrument was appropriate for middle-school students because it used identifiable language, contained phrases which were easily understood, and was able to be completed in a single session in a timely manner. The instrument gathered information to address the goal of this study – to establish the existence of a relationship between parental involvement in education and student satisfaction with school.

### Data Collection

Written permission to administer the survey was obtained from the school principal (Appendix B). Approval was then obtained from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Central Michigan University. Upon IRB approval, a letter explaining the nature of the research project, signed by both the researcher and the school principal (Appendix C) was sent home for passive-parental permission. Passive-parental permission is a practice commonly used in public schools for parents to passively grant

permission for their student to participate in a school-related activity. Parents who wanted their student to participate were not required to do anything. Parents who did not want their student to participate needed to return the slip on the bottom of the permission letter, within three days of its receipt. Survey completion was optional. This was explained to the students by the researcher and was printed on the top of the survey. The researcher administered the survey on March 9, 2009.

Parents and students were assured of confidentiality. Only the researcher had access to the completed surveys. Instructions were read out-loud prior to handing-out the surveys (Appendix D). Upon completion, the surveys were collected by the researcher and placed into a large manila envelope, which was immediately sealed. The envelopes remained sealed until the time of data entry on March 9, 2009. Upon data entry, the surveys were destroyed on March 9, 2009 by the researcher, using a paper shredder. Confidentiality remained paramount at all times (Slavin, 1992; Pedhazur, 1997; Wiersma, 2000; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006, & Nardi, 2006). Confidentiality was maintained by instructing all students to not put their name on the surveys. This was explained to the students by the researcher and was printed on the top of the surveys.

#### Data Treatment, Analysis, and Presentation

The first line of defense in this research project was to conduct descriptive statistics (Slavin, 1992; Pedhazur, 1997; Wiersma, 2000; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006, & Nardi, 2006). Descriptive statistics, including measures of central tendency such as the mean, minimum value, maximum value, and standard deviation, were calculated and



recorded. The significance level, also known as the alpha level or critical value, for this study was at 0.05. This significance level of 0.05 establishes a confidence level of 95%.

The Pearson correlation coefficient was used to analyze the data and test the hypotheses. A correlation coefficient measures the relationship between two quantitative variables. The Pearson correlation coefficient ( $r_{xy}$ ) is a value between positive one and negative one. A positive relationship is indicated by a positive number. A negative relationship is indicated by a negative number. A Pearson correlation coefficient, close to or equaling zero, indicates the absence of a relationship (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006).

To determine if a difference in satisfaction levels existed between students residing with only their biological parents and those not residing with only their biological parents, a Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (2x2) was first calculated. An independent samples *t* test was then employed. To determine if there was a relationship between parental involvement in the education of a middle-school student (independent variable) and student satisfaction with school-related activities (dependent variable) a series of linear regression models were calculated. The findings of this research project are presented in both narrative and graphical formats, and are available upon request. In the narrative format, descriptions are given in both technical and non-technical language for the benefit of the variety of audiences exposed to this research project. In the graphical format, all formulas and symbols are explained in a provided key, to complement comprehension of the findings of this research project.

## Reliability

Reliability refers to the consistency with which an instrument measures what it is supposed to measure (Popham, 2008). Reliability determines if the instrument produces similar results each time it is administered to similar groups of people in similar settings (Wiersma, 2000; Nardi, 2006). One form of reliability evidence is internal consistency reliability evidence. Internal consistency evidence examines the extent to which an instrument is consistent in the way its items function. Lee J. Cronbach originated Cronbach's *coefficient alpha* for internal consistency (Popham, 2008). The Student Satisfaction Survey has a Cronbach's alpha reliability rating range of 0.76 to 0.83 (NASSP, 2007). A Chronbach's alpha value below 0.6 is considered poor, while values above 0.7 are considered acceptable (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006).

## Validity

Validity refers to the degree to which an instrument measures what it purports to measure (Popham, 2008). Validity determines how well an instrument measures what it is intending to measure (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). If it measures what it is intending to measure, it exhibits construct validity (Nardi, 2006). One form of validity evidence is construct-related validity evidence. Construct-related validity evidence examines the extent to which empirical evidence confirms an inferred construct exists and how the instrument is measuring the inferred construct (Popham, 2008). Using construct validity theory, Schmitt & Loher determined the Student Satisfaction Survey is a valid instrument (NASSP, 2007). In addition, a data bank of items was generated by a task force, placing great emphasis on scale and item conceptualization. Position papers were

produced by members of the task force to support strong construct-related validity (Gordon, 1997).

### Summary

This research study examined whether parental involvement in education impacts student satisfaction with school. The Student Satisfaction Survey was used to collect data from each student. The survey was administered to students in one Midwest, middle-school in Michigan in March of 2009. Descriptive statistics, the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient ( $r_{xy}$ ), independent samples t-tests, and linear regression models were conducted to determine if a difference existed between students residing with only biological parents compared to those who do not, and if a relationship existed between parental involvement in the education of a middle-school student (independent variable) and student satisfaction with school-related activities (dependent variable).

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

#### Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between parental involvement in the education of middle-school students and the students' satisfaction with school-related activities, and to determine if a difference in satisfaction levels existed between students who resided with only their biological parents and those who did not. The Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) served as the theoretical framework. The independent variable was parental involvement in the education of middle-school students. The dependent variable was the satisfaction of students with school. Student age at the middle-school level of public education was controlled.

#### Data Collection

The Student Satisfaction Survey (SSS) (Appendix E) was employed to measure satisfaction levels of students with school. The SSS includes questions, employing a six-response Likert scale. Items receive score values of "1" (Very Unhappy) to "5" (Very Happy). Items marked with a "6" indicate a student has no opinion or does not know how to respond to the statement in the survey. To remove potential problems with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) all number six choices were removed from the survey, using a strikethrough. The instrument addressed the goals of this study – to establish if a difference in satisfaction levels existed between students residing with only biological parents compared to those who did not, and if a

relationship existed between parental involvement in education and student satisfaction with school-related activities.

Survey responses were collected in March, 2009 from seven SAM classes at one Midwest middle school, using a paper copy of the SSS survey (Appendix E). The potential respondent population was 104 participants. The final response rate netted an overall sample of  $n = 100$ , or 97%. Of the four participants who did not complete a survey, three did not due to absence and one chose not to participate. The latter simply turned the survey face down and waited for other participants to complete their surveys. This survey was not used.

### Demographic Information

This section outlines the demographic categories of the combined totals of each group, as well as students residing with only their biological parents (Group 1) and students not residing with only their biological parents (Group 2) individually. In addition, the survey collected demographic data for the following categories: grade-level, gender, race, and residence.

### Demographics for Overall Population

#### *Descriptive Statistics of Overall Population (N=100): Students in Grades 6, 7, and 8*

Descriptive statistics were used to describe a set of quantitative data. Often known as the first line of defense in a research study, descriptive statistics provide information regarding the participant characteristics. The descriptive statistics for this research study were collected using an individual data sheet (IDS), created by the

researcher. The IDS provides information regarding the grade-level, gender, race, and residence of the middle school students.

The following list is a legend for the descriptive statistics outlined in Table 1.

Grade-Level: 1 = 6<sup>th</sup> Grade, 2 = 7<sup>th</sup> Grade, 3 = 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

Gender: 1 = Male, 2 = Female

Race: 1 = White, 2 = Hispanic, 3 = African-American,  
4 = Asian-American, 5 = Multi-Racial

Residence: 1 = Student Resides with only biological parents,  
2 = Student does not reside with only biological parents

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for the Overall Population of Students in Grades 6, 7, and 8 (N=100)

		Grade Level	Gender	Race	Residence
N	Valid Data	100	100	100	100
	Missing Data	0	0	0	0
Mean		2.01	1.50	1.22	1.67
Minimum		1	1	1	1
Maximum		3	2	5	2
Std. Deviation		0.689	0.503	0.760	0.473

In addition to descriptive statistics, frequency distributions were created for the overall population (N=100) and for each individual grade-level, gender, race, and residence of the respondents for this research study. Frequency distributions organize and summarize data by displaying, in tabular form, how often specific scores were obtained. From the descriptive statistics and the frequency distributions, inferences are made. Inferential statistics are used to make inferences about large groups of people by

analytical data gathered on the smaller subset of the larger group (Kranzler, 2007).

Histograms were also created to provide a visual representation of the data.

*Grade-Level Frequencies of Overall Population (N=100): Students in Grades 6, 7, & 8*

The grade-level frequencies, illustrated in Table 2 and Figure 1, differed slightly from the school's norm of 29% grade-six students, 41% grade-seven students, and 30% grade-eight students, as of 2008. For this study, 23% of the population was grade six, 53% was grade seven, and 24% was grade eight.

Table 2. Grade-Level Frequencies for the Overall Population (N=100)

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	6	23	23.0	23.0	23.0
	7	53	53.0	53.0	53.0
	8	24	24.0	24.0	24.0
Total		100	100	100	

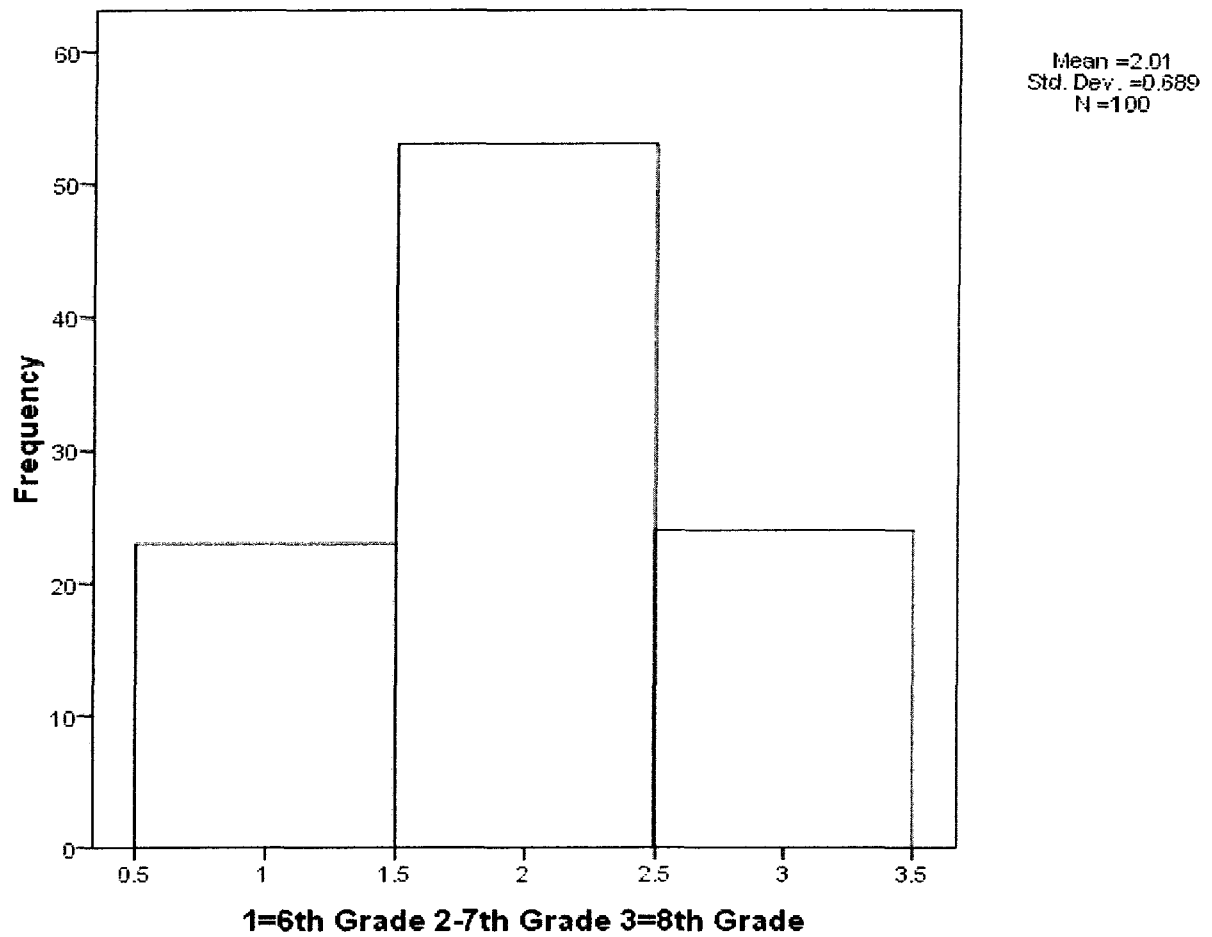


Figure 1. Grade-Level Histogram for Overall Population (N=100)

*Gender Frequencies of Overall Population (N=100): Students in Grades 6, 7, and 8*

The gender frequencies, illustrated in Table 3 and Figure 2, differed slightly to the school's norm of 52% female and 48% male, as of 2008. For this study 50% of the population was female with 50% male.



Table 3. Gender Frequencies for the Overall Population (N=100)

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Male	50	50.0	50.0	50.0
	Female	50	50.0	50.0	50.0
	Total	100	100	100	

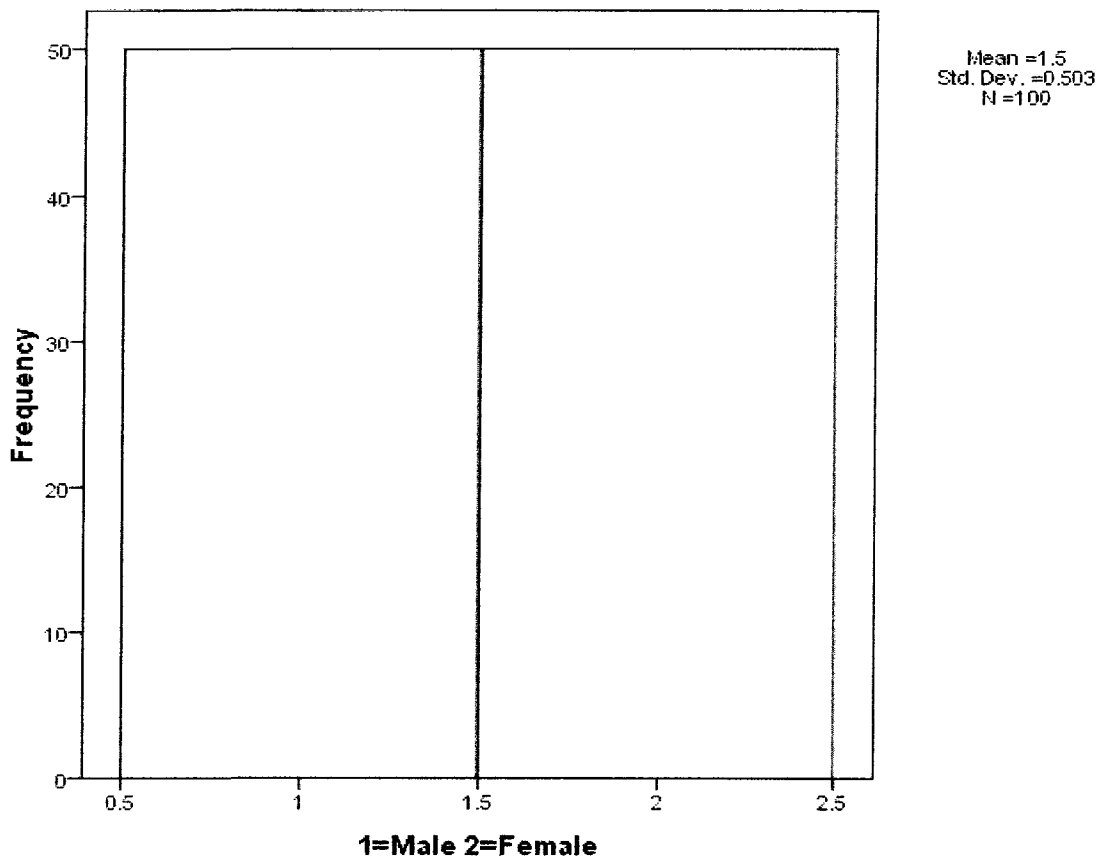


Figure 2. Gender Histogram for Overall Population (N=100)

*Race Frequencies of Overall Population (N=100): Students in Grades 6, 7, and 8*

The race frequencies are illustrated in Table 4 and Figure 3. 90% of the overall population self-reported as “White.” This was closely aligned with the school’s average of 93%. Four percent of the overall population self-reporting as “Hispanic.” This was closely aligned with the school’s average of 3%. Two percent of the overall population self-reporting as “African-American,” 2% of the overall population self-reporting as “Asian-American,” and 2% of the overall population self-reporting as “Multi-Racial.” These were closely aligned with the school’s average of 3%, as of 2008.

Table 4. Race Frequencies for the Overall Population (N=100)

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	White	90	90.0	90.0	90.0
	Hispanic	4	4.0	4.0	4.0
	African-American	2	2.0	2.0	2.0
	Asian-American	2	2.0	2.0	2.0
	Multi-Racial	2	2.0	2.0	2.0
	Total	100	100	100	

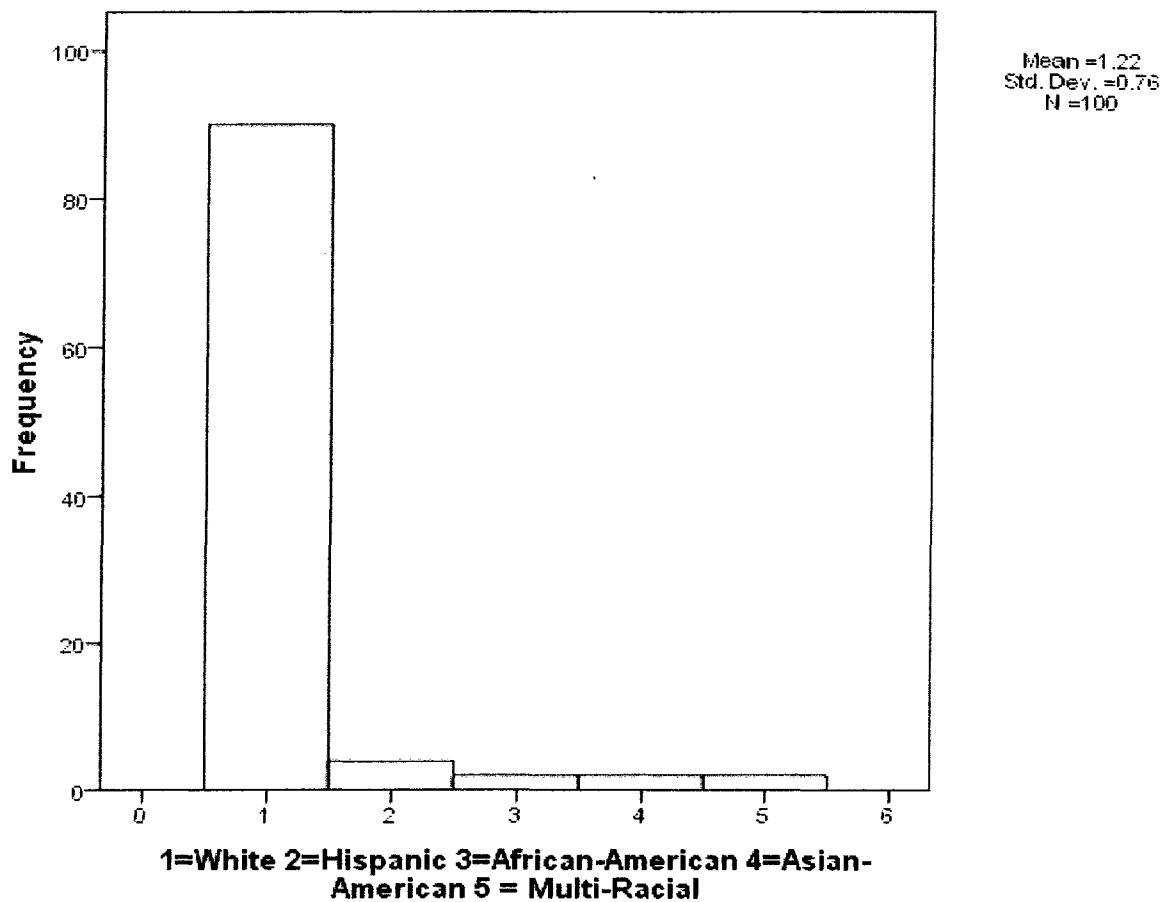


Figure 3. Race Histogram for Overall Population (N=100)

*Student Residence Frequencies of Overall Population (N=100): Students in Grades 6-8*

The frequencies of student residences, is illustrated in Table 5 and Figure 4. For this study 33% of the population self-reported as residing with only biological parents (Group 1), and 67% self-reported as not residing with only biological parents (Group 2).

Table 5. Residence Frequencies for the Overall Population (N=100)  
 Students Residing with Only Biological Parents (N=33)  
 Students Not Residing with Only Biological Parents (N=67)

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Students residing with only Biological Parents	33	33.0	33.0	33.0
	Students not residing with only Biological Parents	67	67.0	67.0	67.0
Total		100	100	100	

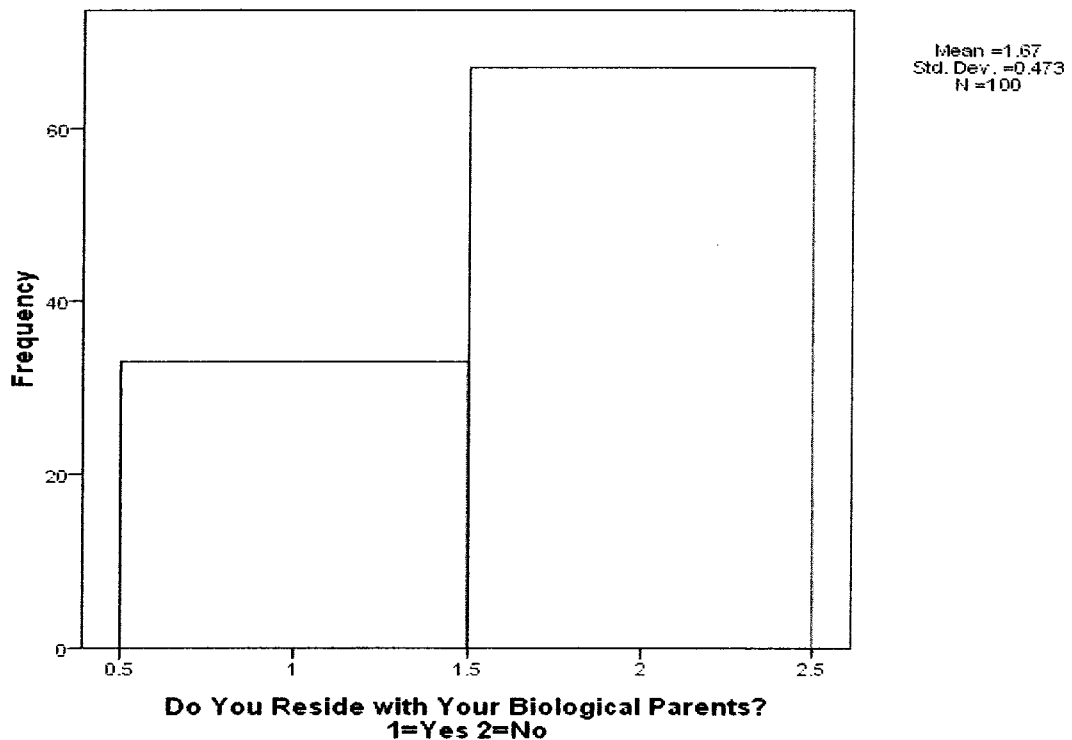


Figure 4. Histogram for Students' Residences / Family Structure (N=100)  
 Students Residing with Only Biological Parents (N=33)  
 Students Not Residing with Only Biological Parents (N=67)

## Demographics of Students Residing with Only Biological Parents

### *Descriptive Statistics of Students Residing with Only Biological Parents*

Students residing with only biological parents (Group 1), was the smaller of the two populations,  $n = 33$ . The following list is a legend for the descriptive statistics outlined in Table 6.

- Grade Level: 1 = 6<sup>th</sup> Grade, 2 = 7<sup>th</sup> Grade, 3 = 8<sup>th</sup> Grade
- Gender: 1 = Male, 2 = Female
- Race: 1 = White, 2 = Hispanic, 3 = African-American,  
4 = Asian-American, 5 = Multi-Racial
- Residence: 1 = Student Resides with only biological parents,  
2 = Student does not reside only with biological parents

Table 6. Descriptive Statistics for Students Residing with Only Biological Parents (N=33)

		Grade			
		Level	Gender	Race	Residence
N	Valid	33	33	33	33
	Data				
	Missing	0	0	0	0
	Data				
Mean		2.00	1.52	1.12	1.00
Minimum		1	1	1	1
Maximum		3	2	5	2
Std. Deviation		0.707	0.508	0.696	0.000

### *Grade-Level Frequencies of Students Residing with Only Biological Parents*

The grade-level breakdown for students residing with only biological parents (Group 1), illustrated in Table 7 and Figure 5, differed from the school's norm of 29% grade-six students, 41% grade-seven students, and 30% grade-eight students, as of 2008. For this study 24% of the population of Group 1 was grade six, 52% was grade seven, and 24% was grade eight.

Table 7. Grade-Level Frequencies for Students  
Residing with Only Biological Parents (N=33)

			Valid		Cumulative %
Frequency			%	%	
Valid	6	8	24.0	24.0	24.0
	7	17	52.0	52.0	52.0
	8	8	24.0	24.0	24.0
Total		33	100	100	

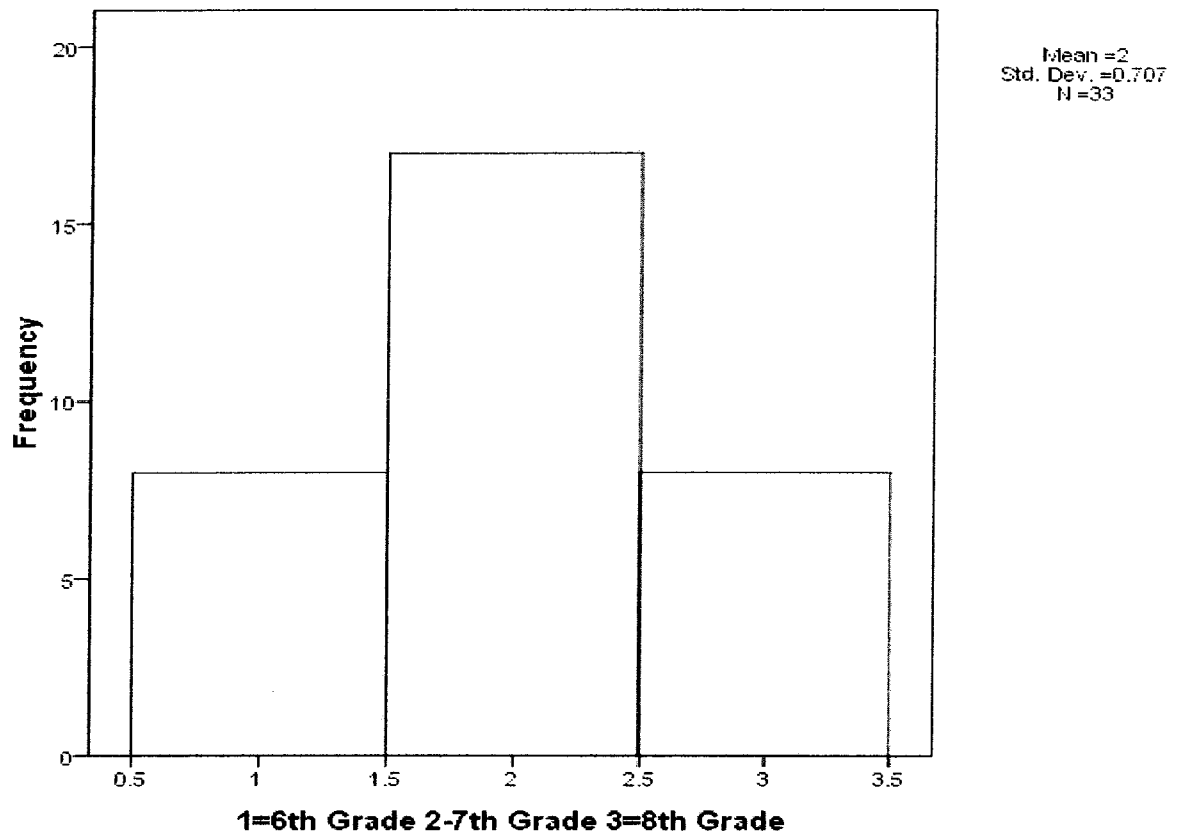


Figure 5. Grade-Level Histogram for Students Residing with Only Biological Parents (N=33)

*Gender Frequencies of Students Residing with Only Biological Parents*

The gender breakdown for students residing with only biological parents (Group 1), illustrated in Table 8 and Figure 6, matched the school's norm of 52% female and 48% male, as of 2008. For this study 52% of the population of Group 1 was female with 48% male.

Table 8. Gender Frequencies for Students Residing with Only Biological Parents (N=33)

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Male	16	48.0	48.0	48.0
	Female	17	52.0	52.0	52.0
	Total	33	100	100	

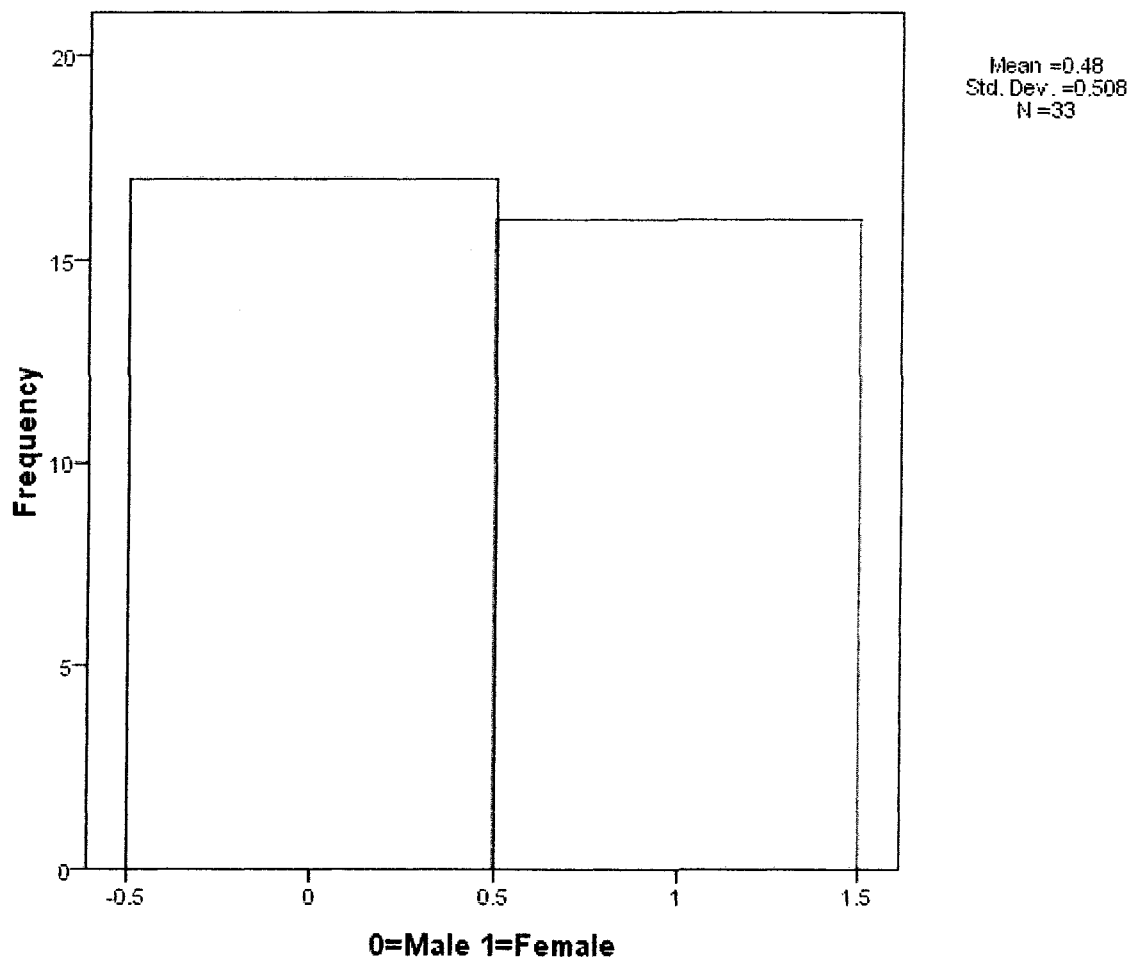


Figure 6. Gender Histogram for Students Residing with Only Biological Parents (N=33)



### *Race Frequencies of Students Residing with Only Biological Parents*

The breakdown of race for students residing with only biological parents (Group 1) is illustrated in Table 9 and Figure 7. 97% of the population of Group 1 self-reported as “White.” This was closely aligned with the school’s average of 93%. None of the population of Group 1 self-reported as “Hispanic.” This was closely aligned with the school’s average of 3%. 0% of the population of Group 1 self-reported as “African-American,” None of the population of Group 1 self-reported as “Asian-American,” and 3% of the population of Group 1 self-reported as “Multi-Racial.” These were aligned with the school’s average of 3%, as of 2008.

Table 9. Race Frequencies for Students Residing with Only Biological Parents (N=33)

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	White	32	97.0	97.0	97.0
	Hispanic	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	African-American	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Asian-American	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Multi-Racial	1	3.0	3.0	3.0
	Total	33	100	100	

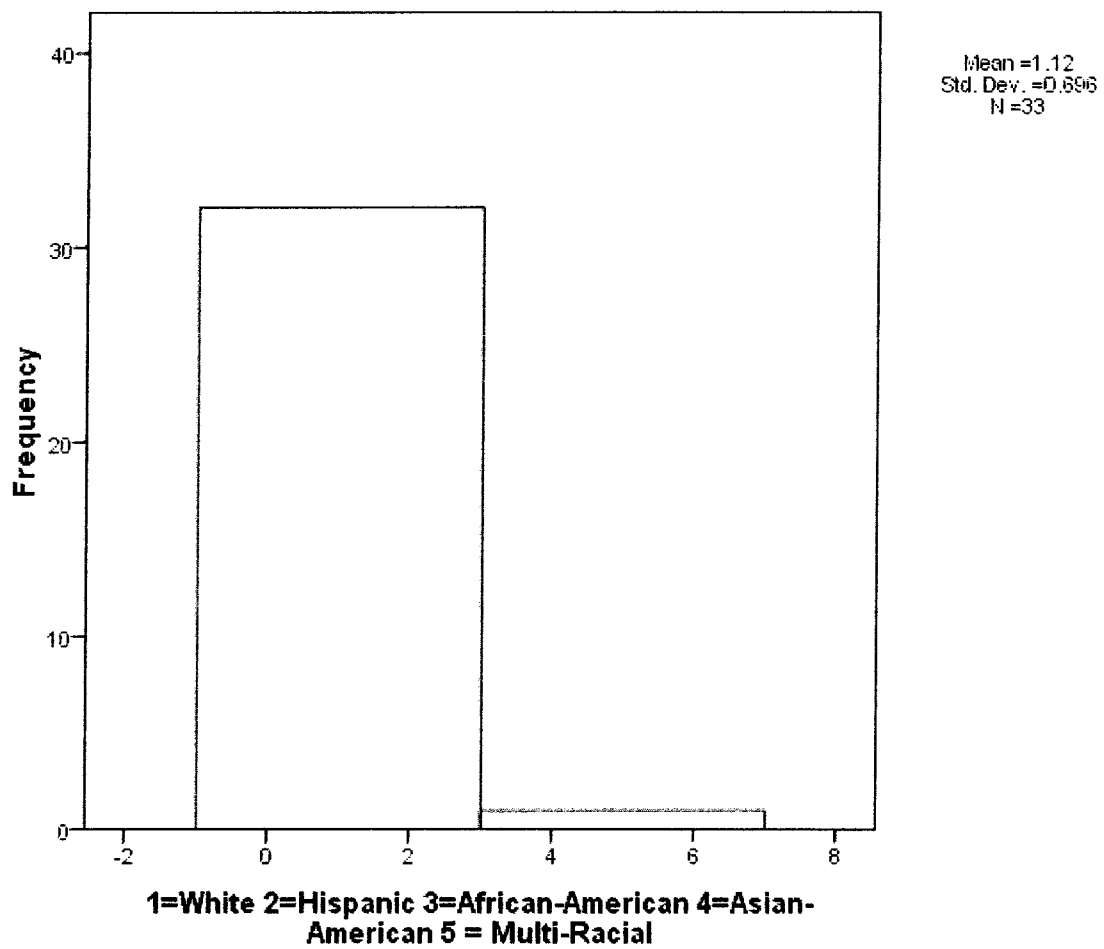


Figure 7. Race Histogram for Students Residing with Only Biological Parents (N=33)

## Demographics of Students Not Residing with Only Biological Parents

### *Descriptive Statistics of Students Not Residing with Only Biological Parents*

The group of students not residing only with biological parents (Group 2), was the larger of the two populations,  $n = 67$ . The following list is a legend for the descriptive statistics outlined in Table 10.

- Grade-Level: 1 = 6<sup>th</sup> Grade, 2 = 7<sup>th</sup> Grade, 3 = 8<sup>th</sup> Grade
- Gender: 1 = Male, 2 = Female
- Race: 1 = White, 2 = Hispanic, 3 = African-American,  
4 = Asian-American, 5 = Multi-Racial
- Residence: 1 = Student Resides with only biological parents,  
2 = Student does not reside with only biological parents

Table 10. Descriptive Statistics for Students Not Residing with Only Biological Parents (N=67)

		Grade Level	Gender	Race	Residence
N	Valid Data	67	67	67	67
	Missing Data	0	0	0	0
Mean		2.01	1.49	1.27	2.00
Minimum		1	1	1	1
Maximum		3	2	5	2
Std. Deviation		0.685	0.504	0.790	0.000

### *Grade-Level Frequencies of Students Not Residing with Only Biological Parents*

The grade-level frequencies for students not residing with only biological parents (Group 2), illustrated in Table 11 and Figure 8, differed from the school's norm of 29% grade-six students, 41% grade-seven students, and 30% grade-eight students, as of 2008. For this study 22% of the population of Group 2 was grade six, 54% was grade seven, and 24% was grade eight.

Table 11. Grade-Level Frequencies for Students Not Residing with Only Biological Parents (N=67)

			Valid		Cumulative %
Frequency			%	%	
Valid	6	15	22.0	22.0	22.0
	7	36	54.0	54.0	54.0
	8	16	24.0	24.0	24.0
Total		67	100	100	

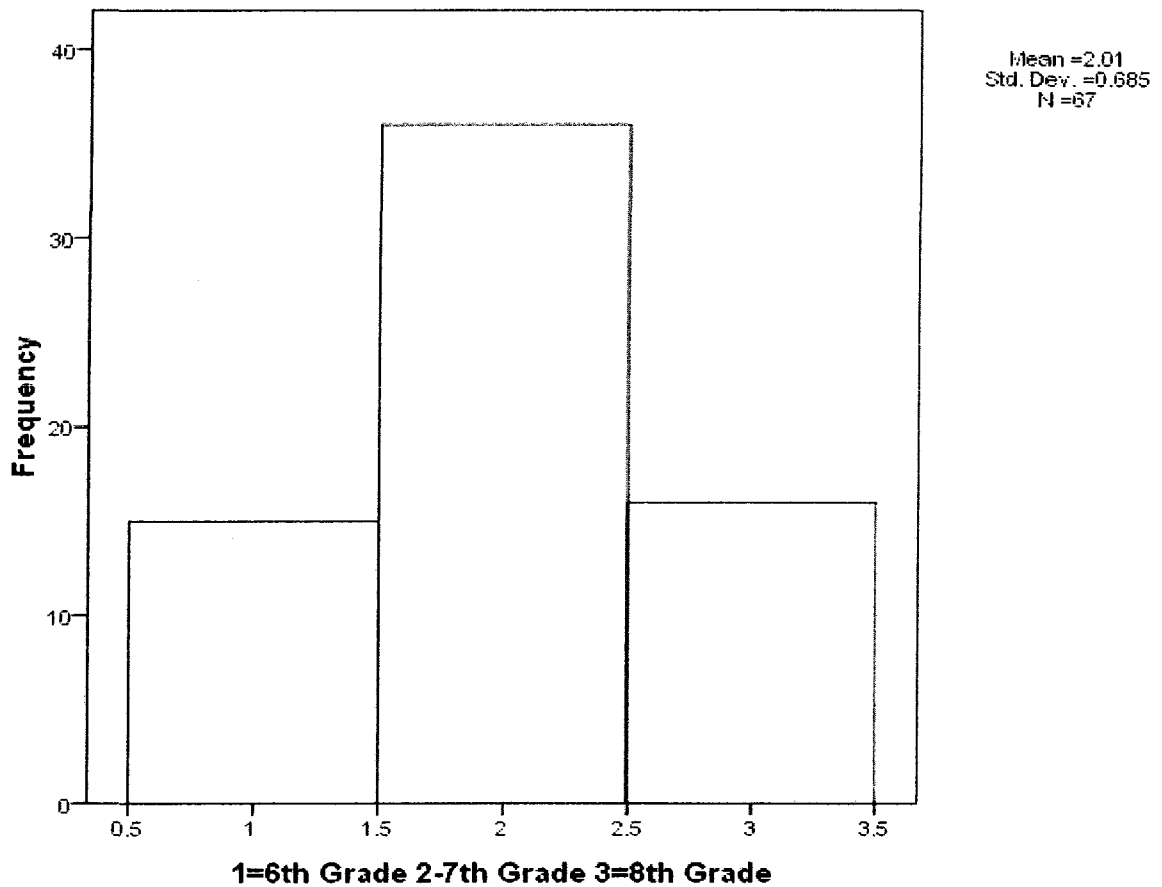


Figure 8. Grade-Level Histogram for Students Not Residing with Only Biological Parents (N=67)

*Gender Frequencies of Students Not Residing with Only Biological Parents*

The gender frequencies for students not residing with only biological parents (Group 2), illustrated in Table 12 and Figure 9, differed slightly to the school's norm of 52% female and 48% male, as of 2008. For this study 50% of the population of Group 2 was female with 50% male.

Table 12. Gender Frequencies for Students Not Residing with Only Biological Parents (N=67)

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Male	34	50.0	50.0	50.0
	Female	33	50.0	50.0	50.0
	Total	67	100	100	

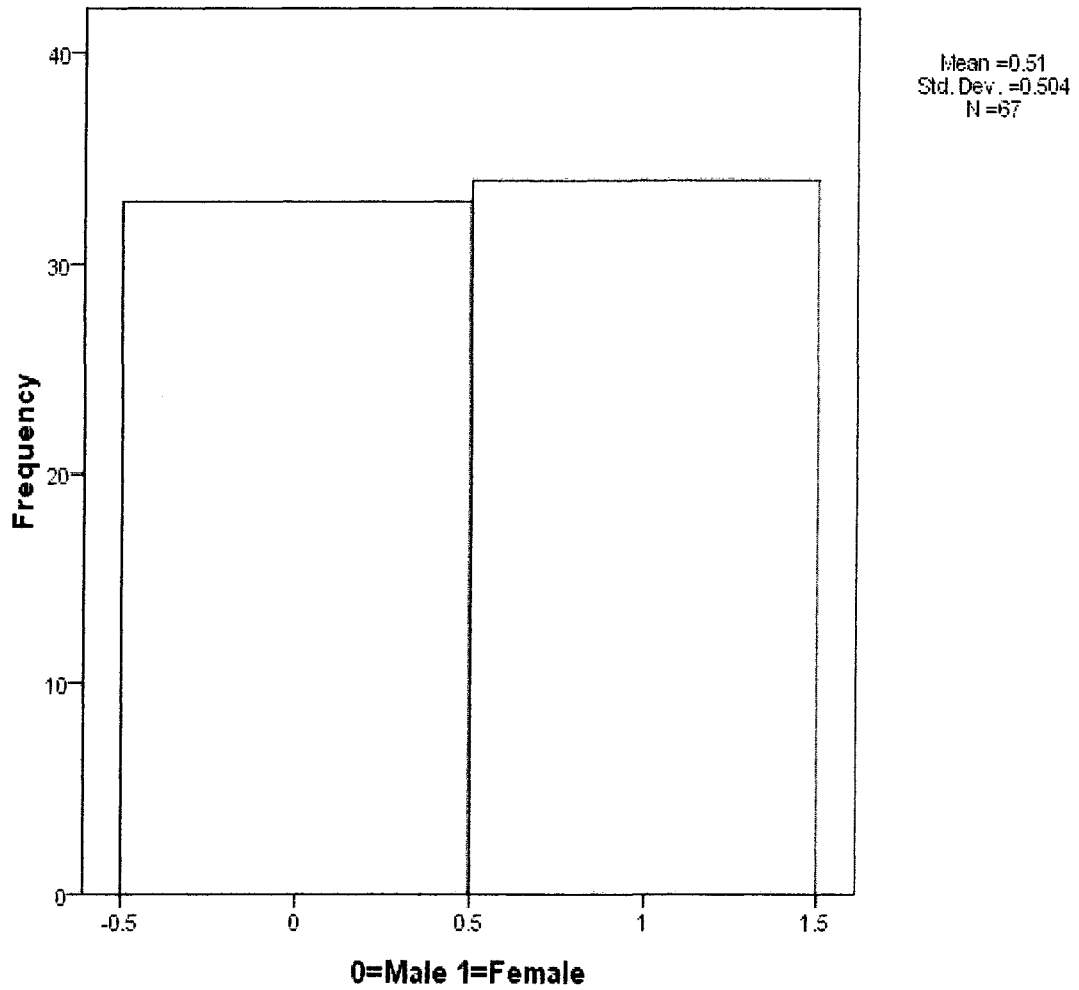


Figure 9. Gender Histogram for Students Not Residing with Only Biological Parents (N=67)

### *Race Frequencies of Students Not Residing with Only Biological Parents*

The race frequencies for students not residing with only biological parents (Group 2) are illustrated in Table 13 and Figure 10. 85% of the population of Group 2 self-reported as “White.” This was closely aligned with the school’s average of 93%. 6% of the population of Group 2 self-reported as “Hispanic.” This was closely aligned with the school’s average of 3%. 3% of the population of Group 2 self-reported as “African-American,” 3% of the population of Group 2 self-reported as “Asian-American,” and 3% of the population of Group 2 self-reported as “Multi-Racial.” These were similar to the school’s average of 3%, as of 2008.

Table 13. Race Frequencies for Students Not Residing with Only Biological Parents (N=67)

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	White	57	85.0	85.0	85.0
	Hispanic	4	6.0	6.0	6.0
	African-American	2	3.0	3.0	3.0
	Asian-American	2	3.0	3.0	3.0
	Multi-Racial	2	3.0	3.0	3.0
	Total	67	100	100	

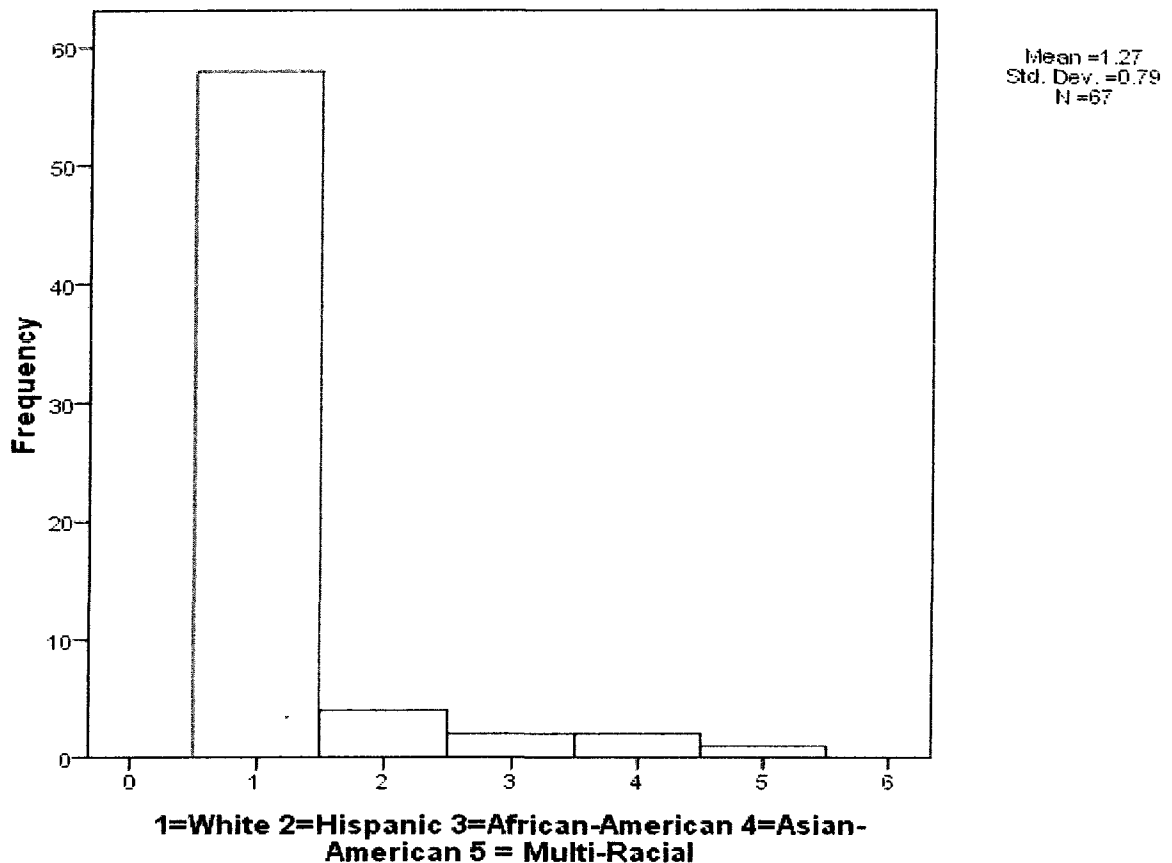


Figure 10. Race Histogram for Students Not Residing with Only Biological Parents (N=67)

#### Analysis of Data

The Student Satisfaction Survey (SSS) (Appendix E) was designed to measure satisfaction levels of students with school. The SSS measures student satisfaction for nine subscales consisting of satisfaction with teachers; satisfaction with fellow students; satisfaction with school work; satisfaction with student activities; satisfaction with student discipline; satisfaction with decision-making opportunities; satisfaction with school buildings, supplies, and upkeep; satisfaction with school-related communication; and statements regarding parental involvement (NASSP, 2007). In addition, an



Individual Data Sheet (IDS) was created to collect demographic information on student grade level, gender, race, and student residence – specifically if students reside only with biological parents (mother and father). A global question on student satisfaction with school was also added.

The data were cleaned and results were tabulated using SPSS software, providing general outcomes and summarizing statistical data. To test for significance, independent sample t-tests were employed using the global question for each subscale of the SSS. If significance was found at  $p \leq 0.05$ , then an independent sample t-test was employed using the mean scores of that subscale of the SSS. The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient ( $r_{xy}$ ), and linear regression models were also employed.

#### Research Question Number One

*Research Question 1: Is There a Difference in Student Satisfaction with School of Students Residing with Only Biological Parents and Those Not Residing with Only Biological Parents?*

Table 14 details the outcome from the  $t$  test. Its primary purpose was to determine whether the means of two groups of scores differed to a statistically significant degree. Like most other statistical tests, the  $t$  test consists of a set of mathematical procedures which yields a numerical value. The larger the absolute value of  $t$ , the more likely it is to reflect a statistically significant difference between the group of students who reside with only their biological parents and the group of students who do not reside with only their biological parents (Kranzler, 2007).

**Table 14. Independent Samples *t*-Test, Using Subscale Mean Scores (N=100)**

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t		t		t		Mean Difference
	F	Sig.							
Mean Score for Satisfaction with Teachers Subscale (Average for Questions 1-6)	Equal variances assumed	8.654	.004***	13.545	98	.000***	1.93879		
Mean Score for Satisfaction with Fellow Students Subscale (Average for Questions 8-11)	Equal variances assumed	.354	.553	13.987	98	.000***	1.82293		
Mean Score for Satisfaction with School Work Subscale (Average for Questions 13-17)	Equal variances assumed	2.957	.089*	11.243	98	.000***	1.51144		
Mean Score for Satisfaction with Student Activities Subscale (Average for Questions 19-22)	Equal variances assumed	.263	.609	14.031	98	.000***	1.85346		
Mean Score for Satisfaction with Student Discipline Subscale (Average for Questions 24-28)	Equal variances assumed	.273	.602	13.905	98	.000***	1.82261		
Mean Score for Satisfaction with Decision-Making Opps. Subscale (Average for Questions 30-33)	Equal variances assumed	1.492	.225	12.770	98	.000***	1.74322		
Mean Score for Satisfaction with School Buildings Subscale (Average for Questions 35-39)	Equal variances assumed	.118	.732	13.648	98	.000***	1.82867		
Mean Score for Satisfaction with Communication Subscale (Average for Questions 41-45)	Equal variances assumed	1.540	.218	14.219	98	.000***	1.89552		
Mean Score for Satisfaction with Parental Involvement Subscale (Average for Questions 47-52)	Equal variances assumed	3.802	.054*	14.495	98	.000***	1.94331		
Satisfaction with Parental Involvement Global Question (Question Number 53)	Equal variances assumed	6.478	.012**	13.483	98	.000***	1.898		
Student Satisfaction with School Global Question (Question Number 54)	Equal variances assumed	3.805	.054*	13.343	98	.000***	1.989		

\* Significant at 0.10 \*\* Significant at 0.05 \*\*\* Significant at 0.01

To create a measure for research question number one, a hypothesis was developed. The first hypothesis tested in this study was,  $H_1$ : There is a difference in student satisfaction with school of students residing with only biological parents compared to those not residing with only biological parents. An independent samples  $t$  test, illustrated in Table 14, was employed to determine if the two groups – students residing with only biological parents and students not residing with only their biological parents – were significantly different.

The null hypothesis for research question number one was,  $H_0$ : There is no difference in student satisfaction with school of students residing with only their biological parents compared to those not residing with only their biological parents. From Table 14, the Sig. (2-tailed)  $p$  value for all subscales is .000. Given that  $.000 < .05$ , the null hypothesis is rejected at the .05 level of significance. It is reasonable to conclude a difference in satisfaction levels does exist for students residing with only their biological parents, compared to students not residing with only their biological parents.

The independent samples  $t$  test assumes two independent samples exist, which means the students for group 1 – students residing with only their biological parents – were selected independently from those in group 2 – students not residing with only their biological parents. For Table 14, subscales employed the use of mean scores for each subscale because student satisfaction with school is a construct and cannot be measured by a single item or variable. In addition, mean scores for each subscale were used to justify the investment of time, made by each respondent, to complete the

additional questions. The mean scores were calculated for each subscale by summing all of the scores for each subscale and then dividing by the number of scores added.

After examination of Levene's test, results from Table 14 confirms equality of variances. The value of Levene's  $F$  statistic for student satisfaction with teachers, derived from the mean score for satisfaction with teachers subscale – the average of scores for questions one through six, was 8.654 at a significance level of .01. The value of Levene's  $F$  statistic for student satisfaction with school work, derived from the mean score for satisfaction with school work subscale – the average of scores for questions 13-17, was 2.957 at a significance level of .10. The value of Levene's  $F$  statistic for student satisfaction with parental involvement, derived from the mean score for the satisfaction with parental involvement subscale – the average score for questions 47-52, was 3.802 at a significance level of .10. The value of Levene's  $F$  statistic for student satisfaction with parental involvement, derived from the satisfaction with parental involvement global question, question number 53, was 6.478 at a significance level of .05. The value of Levene's  $F$  statistic for student satisfaction with school, derived from the student satisfaction with school global question, question number 54, was 3.805 at a significance level of .10. For all other subscales – student satisfaction with fellow students, student activities, student discipline, decision-making opportunities, the school building, and communication – the values of Levene's  $F$  statistics were not found to be significant.

A difference does exist between the mean scores of students residing with only their biological parents and the mean scores of students not residing with only their biological parents (see Table 14). A mean difference of 1.989 exists between students

residing with only their biological parents and students not residing with only their biological parents. Subscales for satisfaction with teachers, fellow students, school work, student activities, student discipline, decision-making opportunities, the school building, communication, and parental involvement revealed similar mean differences ranging from 1.51144 to 1.93879. These numbers equate to a difference in mean scores, between students residing with only their biological parents compared to those who did not reside with only their biological parents, of approximately positive two.

In summary, students residing with only their biological parents self-reported an average satisfaction with school level of four (happy with school). This was, on average, two levels of satisfaction higher compared to students not residing with only their biological parents, who self-reported an average satisfaction with school level of two (unhappy with school).

## Research Question Number Two

*Research Question 2: What is the Relationship Between Parental Involvement in Education and Student Satisfaction with School-Related Activities?*

The relationship between parental involvement in education and student satisfaction with school-related activities was measured several ways. To establish if a relationship exists between the two variables – student satisfaction with school-related activities (the dependent variable), and parental involvement in education (the independent variable) – a scatter-plot depicting the relationship between satisfaction with parental involvement and satisfaction with school-related activities was first created. The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient ( $r_{xy}$ ) was employed,

followed by linear regression models. Figure 11 is a scatter-plot illustrating a positive relationship exists between satisfaction with parental involvement (the independent variable) and satisfaction with school-related activities (the dependent variable).

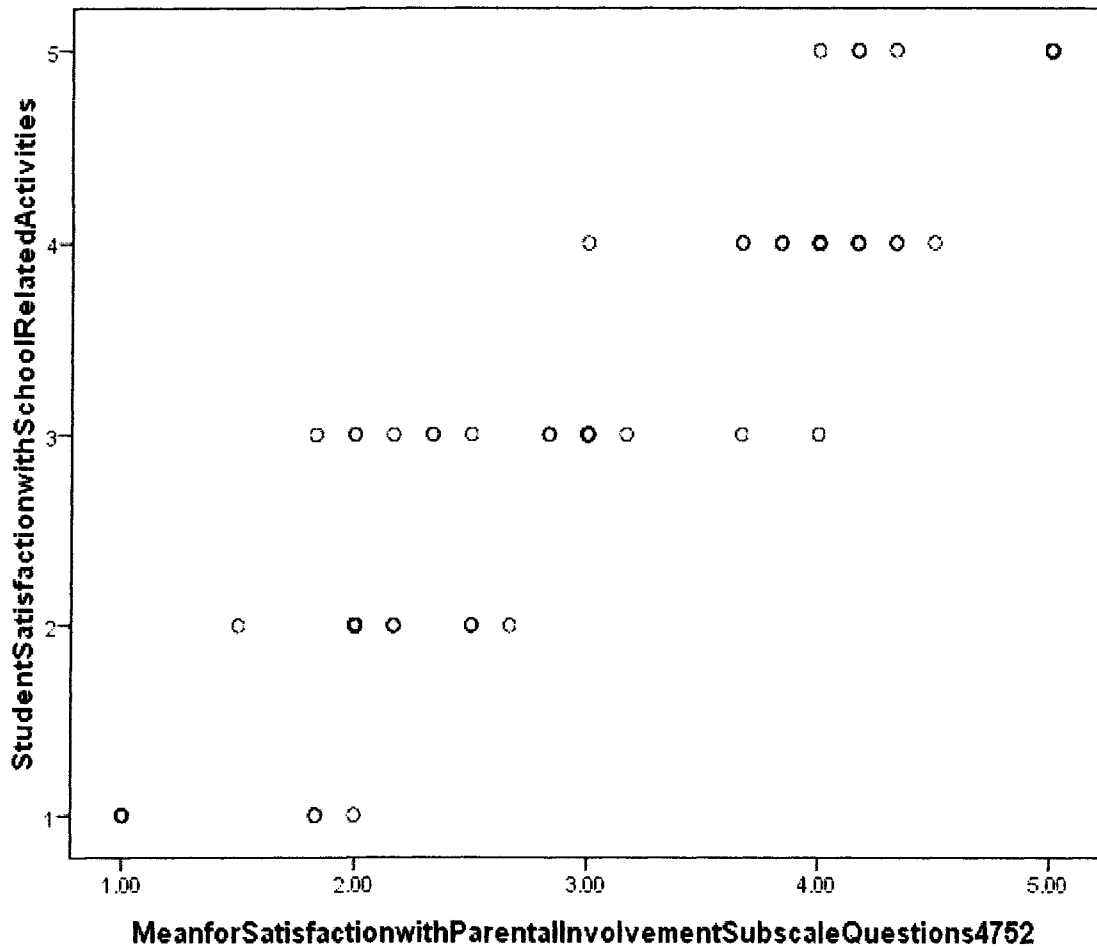


Figure 11. Scatter-plot of the Relationship between Satisfaction with Parental Involvement and Satisfaction with School-Related Activities

Table 15 reveals the Pearson  $r_{xy}$  of 0.943, significant at  $p = .01$ . Since the correlation of +0.943 is positive and near +1.00, the variables are highly related.

Table 15. Correlation between Student Satisfaction with School-Related Activities (the Dependent Variable) and Satisfaction with Parental Involvement (the Independent Variable) – Using Mean Scores for Satisfaction with Parental Involvement

		Mean Score for Satisfaction with Parental Involvement Subscale (Questions 47-52)	Student Satisfaction with School-Related Activities (Question 54)
Mean Score for Satisfaction with Parental Involvement Subscale (Questions 47-52)	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.943***
	Sig. (2- tailed)		.000
	N	100	100
Student Satisfaction with School- Related Activities (Question 54)	Pearson Correlation	.943***	1.000
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.000	
	N	100	100

\*\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

A linear regression model, showing the relationship between parental involvement and student satisfaction with school-related activities is illustrated in Table 16.

**Table 16: The Relationship Between Parental Involvement and Student Satisfaction with School-Related Activities (Controlling for Gender and Residence of Student)**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	
1	(Constant)	1.016	.419		2.427	.017**
	Student Satisfaction with Parental Involvement (Global Question No. 53)	.862	.064	.820	13.575	.000***
	Gender = Female	.065	.083	.028	.781	.437
	Student does not reside with only biological parents	-.354	.149	-.143	-2.375	.020**

a. Dependent Variable:  
Student Satisfaction with School  
(Global Question No. 54)

b. Independent Variables:  
Student Satisfaction with Parental Involvement  
(Global Question No. 53),  
Gender = Female, and  
Student does not reside with only biological parents.

Note: R Square = 0.879,  
Adjusted R Square = 0.875

\* Significant at 0.10

\*\* Significant at 0.05

\*\*\* Significant at 0.01



To create a measure for research question number two, a hypothesis was developed. The second hypothesis tested in this study was, H<sub>2</sub>: There is a relationship between parental involvement in education and student satisfaction with school-related activities. From Table 16, with regards to student satisfaction and school-related activities, parental involvement in education was positively related at a significance level of 0.01. Reference groups were made, and revealed students not residing with only their biological parents were negatively related at a significance level of 0.05.

The regression equation used in SPSS (Kranzler, 2007) is:  $Y = (B_{\text{slope}})(X) + (B_{\text{constant}})$

Y = Predicted value of student satisfaction with school-related activities

$B_{\text{slope}}$  = Slope Weight

X = Predictor value for student satisfaction with parental involvement

$B_{\text{constant}}$  = Additive Constant

From the equation, [Predicted Value of Student Satisfaction with School-Related Activities =  $(0.862) * (\text{Student Satisfaction with Parental Involvement in School}) + (1.016)$ ], student satisfaction with school can be predicted (see Table 16). A student self-selecting a score of five (very happy) for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of five (very happy) for satisfaction with school-related activities. A student self-selecting a score of four (happy) for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of 4.464 (between happy and very happy) for satisfaction with school-related activities. A student self-selecting a score of three (neither happy nor unhappy) for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of 3.602 (between neither happy nor unhappy and happy) for satisfaction with school-related activities. A student self-selecting a score of two (unhappy) for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select

a score of 2.740 (between unhappy and neither happy nor unhappy) for satisfaction with school-related activities. A student self-selecting a score of one (very unhappy) for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of 1.878 (between very unhappy and unhappy) for satisfaction with school-related activities. The coefficient of determination (R Square) score of .879 means 87.9% of the differences in student satisfaction with school-related activities were related to, and can be accounted for by, differences in student satisfaction with parental involvement.

#### *Student Satisfaction with Teachers*

The first subscale, questions one through seven, measured student satisfaction with teachers. A linear regression model, showing the relationship between parental involvement and student satisfaction with teachers, is illustrated in Table 17.

Table 17: The Relationship Between Parental Involvement and Student Satisfaction with Teachers (Controlling for Gender and Residence of Student)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.874	.355		2.460	.016**
	Student Satisfaction with Parental Involvement (Global Question No. 53)	.873	.054	.856	16.198	.000***
	Gender = Female	.039	.071	.017	.547	.586
	Student does not reside with only biological parents	-.283	.127	-.118	-2.239	.027**

a. Dependent Variable:

Mean Score for Satisfaction with Teachers Subscale (Questions1-6)

b. Independent Variables:

Student Satisfaction with Parental Involvement (Global Question No. 53),

Gender = Female, and

Student does not reside with only biological parents.

Note: R Square = 0.907, Adjusted R Square = 0.904

\* Significant at 0.10

\*\* Significant at 0.05

\*\*\* Significant at 0.01

From Table 17, student satisfaction with teachers and parental involvement in education were positively related at a significance level of 0.01. Reference groups were made, and revealed students not residing with only their biological parents were negatively related at a significance level of 0.05. From the regression equation [Predicted Value of Student Satisfaction with Teachers = (0.873) \* (Student Satisfaction with Parental Involvement in School) + (0.874)], student satisfaction with teachers can be predicted (see Table 17). A student self-selecting a five for satisfaction with parental

involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of five for satisfaction with teachers. A student self-selecting a score of four for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of 4.366 for satisfaction with teachers. A student self-selecting a score of three for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of 3.493 for satisfaction with teachers. A student self-selecting a score of two for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of 2.620 for satisfaction with teachers. A student self-selecting a score of one for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of 1.747 for satisfaction with teachers. The coefficient of determination (R Square) score of .907 means 90.7% of the differences in student satisfaction with teachers were related to, and can be accounted for by, differences in student satisfaction with parental involvement.

#### *Student Satisfaction with Fellow Students*

The second subscale, questions eight through 12, measured student satisfaction with fellow students. A linear regression model, showing the relationship between parental involvement and student satisfaction with fellow students is illustrated in Table 18.

Table 18: The Relationship Between Parental Involvement and Student Satisfaction with Fellow Students (Controlling for Gender and Residence of Student)

Model		Unstandardized	Standardized	T	Sig.
		Coefficients	Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	1.391	.370		3.762 .000***
	Student Satisfaction with Parental Involvement (Global Question No. 53)	.750	.056	.791	13.372 .000***
	Gender = Female	.068	.074	.032	.925 .357
	Student does not reside with only biological parents	-.401	.132	-.180	-3.045 .003***

a. Dependent Variable:

Mean Score for Satisfaction with Fellow Students Subscale (Questions8-11)

b. Independent Variables:

Student Satisfaction with Parental Involvement (Global Question No. 53), Gender = Female, and Student does not reside with only biological parents.

Note: R Square = 0.883,

Adjusted R Square = 0.880

\* Significant at 0.10

\*\* Significant at 0.05

\*\*\* Significant at 0.01

From Table 18, student satisfaction with fellow students and parental involvement in education were positively related at a significance level of 0.01. Reference groups were made, and revealed students not residing with only their biological parents are negatively related at a significance level of 0.01. From the regression equation [Predicted Value of Student Satisfaction with Fellow Students = (0.750) \* (Student Satisfaction with Parental Involvement in School) + (1.391)], student

satisfaction with fellow students can be predicted (see Table 18). A student self-selecting a five for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of five for satisfaction with fellow students. A student self-selecting a score of four for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of 4.391 for satisfaction with fellow students. A student self-selecting a score of three for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of 3.641 for satisfaction with fellow students. A student self-selecting a score of two for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of 2.891 for satisfaction with fellow students. A student self-selecting a score of one for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of 2.141 for satisfaction with fellow students. The coefficient of determination (R Square) score of .883 means 88.3% of the differences in student satisfaction with fellow students were related to, and can be accounted for by, differences in student satisfaction with parental involvement.

#### *Student Satisfaction with School Work*

A third subscale, questions 13 through 18, measured student satisfaction with school work. A linear regression model, showing the relationship between parental involvement and student satisfaction with school work is illustrated in Table 19.

Table 19: The Relationship Between Parental Involvement and Student Satisfaction with School Work (Controlling for Gender and Residence of Student)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.574	.394		1.456	.149
	Student Satisfaction with Parental Involvement (Global Question No. 53)	.758	.060	.886	12.671	.000***
	Gender = Female	.039	.078	.020	.494	.622
	Student does not reside with only biological parents	-.074	.141	-.037	-.523	.602

a. Dependent Variable:

Mean Score for Satisfaction with School Work Subscale (Questions13-17)

b. Independent Variables:

Student Satisfaction with Parental Involvement

(Global Question No. 53),

Gender = Female, and

Student does not reside with only biological parents.

Note: R Square = 0.837,

Adjusted R Square = 0.832

\* Significant at 0.10

\*\* Significant at 0.05

\*\*\* Significant at 0.01

From Table 19, student satisfaction with school work and parental involvement in education were positively related at a significance level of 0.01. From the regression equation [Predicted Value of Student Satisfaction with School Work = (0.758) \* (Student Satisfaction with Parental Involvement in School) + (0.574)], student satisfaction with school work can be predicted (see Table 19). A student self-selecting a score of five for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a

score of 4.364 for satisfaction with school work. A student self-selecting a score of four for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of 3.606 for satisfaction with school work. A student self-selecting a score of three for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of 2.848 for satisfaction with school work. A student self-selecting a score of two for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of 2.090 for satisfaction with school work. A student self-selecting a score of one for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of 1.332 for satisfaction with school work. The coefficient of determination (R Square) score of .837 means 83.7% of the differences in student satisfaction with school work were related to, and can be accounted for by, differences in student satisfaction with parental involvement.

#### *Student Satisfaction with Student Activities*

A fourth subscale, questions 19 through 23, measured student satisfaction with student activities. A linear regression model, showing the relationship between parental involvement and student satisfaction with student activities is illustrated in Table 20.



Table 20: The Relationship Between Parental Involvement and Student Satisfaction with Student Activities (Controlling for Gender and Residence of Student)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.177	.338		3.483	.001***
	Student Satisfaction with Parental Involvement (Global Question No. 53)	.798	.051	.828	15.561	.000***
	Gender = Female	.074	.067	.035	1.108	.271
	Student does not reside with only biological parents	-.342	.120	-.151	-2.838	.006***

a. Dependent Variable:

Mean Score for Satisfaction with Student Activities Subscale (Questions 19-22)

b. Independent Variables:

Student Satisfaction with Parental Involvement

(Global Question No. 53)

Gender = Female, and

Student does not reside with only biological parents.

Note: R Square = 0.906,

Adjusted R Square = 0.903

\* Significant at 0.10

\*\* Significant at 0.05

\*\*\* Significant at 0.01

From Table 20, student satisfaction with student activities and parental involvement in education were positively related at a significance level of 0.01. Reference groups were made, and revealed students not residing with only their biological parents are negatively related at a significance level of 0.01. From the regression equation [Predicted Value of Student Satisfaction with Student Activities = (0.798) \* (Student Satisfaction with Parental Involvement in School) + (1.177)], student satisfaction with student activities can be predicted (see Table 20). A student self-

selecting a score of five for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of five for satisfaction with student activities. A student self-selecting a score of four for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of 4.369 for satisfaction with student activities. A student self-selecting a score of three for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of 3.571 for satisfaction with student activities. A student self-selecting a score of two for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of 2.773 for satisfaction with student activities. A student self-selecting a score of one for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of 1.975 for satisfaction with student activities. The coefficient of determination (R Square) score of .906 means 90.6% of the differences in student satisfaction with student activities were related to, and can be accounted for by, differences in student satisfaction with parental involvement.

#### *Student Satisfaction with Student Discipline*

A fifth subscale, questions 24 through 29, measured student satisfaction with student discipline. A linear regression model, showing the relationship between parental involvement and student satisfaction with student discipline is illustrated in Table 21.

Table 21: The Relationship Between Parental Involvement and Student Satisfaction with Student Discipline (Controlling for Gender and Residence of Student)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.217	.344		3.533	.001***
	Student Satisfaction with Parental Involvement (Global Question No. 53)	.780	.052	.821	14.918	.000***
	Gender = Female	.008	.069	.004	.111	.912
	Student does not reside with only biological parents	-.343	.123	-.153	-2.794	.006***

a. Dependent Variable:

Mean Score for Satisfaction with Student Discipline Subscale (Questions 24-28)

b. Independent Variables:

Student Satisfaction with Parental Involvement

(Global Question No. 53),

Gender = Female, and

Student does not reside with only biological parents.

Note: R Square = 0.899,

Adjusted R Square = 0.896

\* Significant at 0.10

\*\* Significant at 0.05

\*\*\* Significant at 0.01

From Table 21, student satisfaction with student discipline and parental involvement in education were positively related at a significance level of 0.01. Reference groups were made, and revealed students not residing with only their biological parents are negatively related at a significance level of 0.01. From the regression equation [Predicted Value of Student Satisfaction with Student Discipline =  $(0.780) * (\text{Student Satisfaction with Parental Involvement in School}) + (1.217)$ ], student satisfaction with student discipline can be predicted (see Table 21). A student self-

selecting a score of five for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of five for satisfaction with student discipline. A student self-selecting a score of four for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of 4.337 for satisfaction with student discipline. A student self-selecting a score of three for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of 3.557 for satisfaction with student discipline. A student self-selecting a score of two for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of 2.777 for satisfaction with student discipline. A student self-selecting a score of one for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of 1.997 for satisfaction with student discipline. The coefficient of determination (R Square) score of .899 means 89.9% of the differences in student satisfaction with student discipline were related to, and can be accounted for by, differences in student satisfaction with parental involvement.

#### *Student Satisfaction with Decision-Making Opportunities*

A sixth subscale, questions 30 through 34, measured student satisfaction with decision-making opportunities. A linear regression model, showing the relationship between parental involvement and student satisfaction with decision-making opportunities is illustrated in Table 22.

Table 22: The Relationship Between Parental Involvement and Student Satisfaction with Decision-Making Opportunities (Controlling for Gender and Residence of Student)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	
1	(Constant)	1.079	.357		3.024	.003***
	Student Satisfaction with Parental Involvement (Global Question No. 53)	.816	.054	.871	15.080	.000***
	Gender = Female	.049	.071	.024	.698	.487
	Student does not reside with only biological parents	-.195	.127	-.089	-1.538	.127

a. Dependent Variable:  
Mean Score for Satisfaction with Decision-Making Op. Subscale (Questions30-33)

b. Independent Variables:  
Student Satisfaction with Parental Involvement (Global Question No. 53),  
Gender = Female, and  
Student does not reside with only biological parents.

Note: R Square = 0.889,  
Adjusted R Square = 0.885

\* Significant at 0.10

\*\* Significant at 0.05

\*\*\* Significant at 0.01

From Table 22, student satisfaction with decision-making opportunities and parental involvement in education were positively related at a significance level of 0.01. From the regression equation [Predicted Value of Student Satisfaction with Decision-Making Opportunities = (0.816) \* (Student Satisfaction with Parental Involvement in School) + (1.079)], student satisfaction with decision-making opportunities can be

predicted (see Table 22). A student self-selecting a score of five for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of five for satisfaction with decision-making opportunities. A student self-selecting a score of four for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of 4.343 for satisfaction with decision-making opportunities. A student self-selecting a score of three for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of 3.527 for satisfaction with decision-making opportunities. A student self-selecting a score of two for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of 2.711 for satisfaction with decision-making opportunities. A student self-selecting a score of one for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of 1.895 for satisfaction with decision-making opportunities. The coefficient of determination (R Square) score of .889 means 88.9% of the differences in student satisfaction with decision-making opportunities were related to, and can be accounted for by, differences in student satisfaction with parental involvement.

#### *Student Satisfaction with the School Building, Supplies, Upkeep*

A seventh subscale, questions 35 through 40, measured student satisfaction with the school building, supplies, and upkeep. A linear regression model, showing the relationship between parental involvement and student satisfaction with the school building is illustrated in Table 23.

Table 23: The Relationship Between Parental Involvement and Student Satisfaction with the School Building (Controlling for Gender and Residence of Student)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	
1	(Constant)	1.094	.351		3.116	.002***
	Student Satisfaction with Parental Involvement (Global Question No. 53)	.800	.053	.834	15.020	.000***
	Gender = Female	.038	.070	.018	.547	.585
	Student does not reside with only biological parents	-.312	.125	-.138	-2.491	.014**

a. Dependent Variable:  
Mean Score for Satisfaction with School Buildings Subscale (Questions 35-39)

b. Independent Variables:  
Student Satisfaction with Parental Involvement (Global Question No. 53),  
Gender = Female, and  
Student does not reside with only biological parents.

Note: R Square = 0.897,  
Adjusted R Square = 0.894

\* Significant at 0.10

\*\* Significant at 0.05

\*\*\* Significant at 0.01

From Table 23, student satisfaction with the school building and parental involvement in education were positively related at a significance level of 0.01. Reference groups were made, and revealed students not residing with only their biological parents are negatively related at a significance level of 0.05. From the regression equation [Predicted Value of Student Satisfaction with the School Building = (0.800) \* (Student Satisfaction with Parental Involvement in School) + (1.094)], student

satisfaction with the school building can be predicted (see Table 23). A student self-selecting a score of five for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of five for satisfaction with the school building. A student self-selecting a score of four for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of 4.294 for satisfaction with the school building. A student self-selecting a score of three for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of 3.494 for satisfaction with the school building. A student self-selecting a score of two for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of 2.694 for satisfaction with the school building. A student self-selecting a score of one for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of 1.894 for satisfaction with the school building. The coefficient of determination (R Square) score of .899 means 89.9% of the differences in student satisfaction with the school building were related to, and can be accounted for by, differences in student satisfaction with parental involvement.

#### *Student Satisfaction with Communication*

An eighth subscale, questions 41 through 46, measured student satisfaction with communication. A linear regression model, showing the relationship between parental involvement and student satisfaction with communication is illustrated in Table 24.



Table 24: The Relationship Between Parental Involvement and Student Satisfaction with Communication (Controlling for Gender and Residence of Student)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	
1	(Constant)	1.004	.306		3.285	.001***
	Student Satisfaction with Parental Involvement (Global Question No. 53)	.836	.046	.852	18.014	.000***
	Gender = Female	.080	.061	.037	1.315	.192
	Student does not reside with only biological parents	-.312	.109	-.135	-2.861	.005***

a. Dependent Variable:  
Mean Score for Satisfaction with Communication Subscale (Questions 41-45)

b. Independent Variables:  
Student Satisfaction with Parental Involvement (Global Question No. 53),  
Gender = Female, and  
Student does not reside with only biological parents.

Note: R Square = 0.925,  
Adjusted R Square = 0.923

\* Significant at 0.10

\*\* Significant at 0.05

\*\*\* Significant at 0.01

From Table 24, student satisfaction with communication and parental involvement in education were positively related at a significance level of 0.01. Reference groups were made, and revealed students not residing with only their biological parents are negatively related at a significance level of 0.01. From the regression equation [Predicted Value of Student Satisfaction with Communication = (0.836) \* (Student Satisfaction with Parental Involvement in School) + (1.004)], student

satisfaction with communication can be predicted (see Table 24). A student self-selecting a score of five for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of five for satisfaction with communication. A student self-selecting a score of four for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of 4.348 for satisfaction with communication. A student self-selecting a score of three for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of 3.512 for satisfaction with communication. A student self-selecting a score of two for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of 2.676 for satisfaction with communication. A student self-selecting a score of one for satisfaction with parental involvement can be predicted to self-select a score of 1.840 for satisfaction with communication. The coefficient of determination (R Square) score of .925 means 92.5% of the differences in student satisfaction with communication were related to, and can be accounted for by, differences in student satisfaction with parental involvement.

### Summary

The results of this research study illustrate there is a relationship between parental involvement in education and student satisfaction with school-related activities, at the middle-school level. The study also reveals there is a difference in student satisfaction with school of students residing with only biological parents and those not residing with only biological parents. The results demonstrate students who reside with only their biological parents have higher levels of satisfaction with school compared to students who do not reside with only their biological parents. Conversely, students who

do not reside with only their biological parents have lower levels of satisfaction with school compared to those who reside with only their biological parents. The study reveals one-third of students reside with only their biological parents and possess higher levels of satisfaction with school. The study also reveals two-thirds of students do not reside with only their biological parents and possess lower levels of satisfaction with school. The data does not reveal an impact on student satisfaction from grade-level, gender or race.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between parental involvement in the education of middle-school students and the students' satisfaction with school-related activities, and to determine if a difference in satisfaction levels existed between students who resided with only their biological parents and those who did not. The Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) served as the theoretical framework. The independent variable was parental involvement in the education of middle-school students. The dependent variable was the satisfaction of students with school. Student age at the middle-school level of public education was controlled.

Participants for this research study were students in grades six, seven, and eight. The location for the study was one Midwest middle school. Student satisfaction was an overall indicator measured by summing responses to the Student Satisfaction Survey (SSS), which include subscales (NASSP, 2007). The subscales measured student satisfaction with teachers, fellow students, school work, student activities, student discipline, decision-making opportunities, school buildings, supplies and upkeep, and communication. Global questions, measuring overall satisfaction with school, was added after receiving permission to do so from the survey's creators. Characteristics used in this study were grade-level, gender, and residence – a question created to ascertain if students resided with only their biological parents.

## Methodology Summary

An Individual Data Sheet (IDS) was developed and distributed, along with the Student Satisfaction Survey (SSS), to students ( $n=100$ ) at one Midwest middle school on March 9, 2009. Participation was voluntary. Each participant received the purpose of the study, the SSS, the method for declining to participate, a statement of assent, and an incentive to participate.

The initial request to participate was given to participants on March 2, 2009, in the form of a letter to be taken home by students for their parents. Parents were provided with the purpose of the study, the procedures involved with the study, and a method for declining to participate. Data collection was conducted on March 9, 2009. Of the potential 104 participants, the final response rate was 97% ( $n=100$ ), with a usable response rate of 97% ( $n=100$ ). The response rate exceeded the 90% desired response rate.

Survey results were loaded into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 16.00 for analysis. Descriptive statistics, independent samples  $t$  tests, the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient ( $r_{xy}$ ), and linear regressions were used to analyze the data. These quantitative statistical techniques were used to determine if a difference in satisfaction levels with school existed between students who resided with only their biological parents compared to those who did not, and if a relationship between parental involvement in the education of middle-school students (independent variable) and students' satisfaction with school-related activities (dependent variable) was evident.

## Summary of Findings

This research study used quantitative analysis techniques to investigate the research questions. The key findings for the research study are provided in Table 25.

Table 25. Key Findings of Research Study

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### Key Findings

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- 1) There is difference in satisfaction levels between students who reside with only their biological parents and those who do not reside with only their biological parents.
  - 2) There is a positive relationship between parental involvement in education and student satisfaction with school-related activities.
- 

#### *Research Question 1: Is There a Difference in Student Satisfaction with School of Students Residing with Only Biological Parents and Those Not Residing with Only Biological Parents?*

The focus of the first research question was to examine if a difference existed in student satisfaction levels between students residing with only biological parents compared to those not residing with only their biological parents. The results of this study indicated a negative relationship between students residing in homes with adults other than their biological-parents, and student satisfaction with school. Students who did not reside with only their biological parents possessed lower levels of satisfaction with school, compared to students who resided with only their biological parents. A significance level was established at a level of  $p=0.05$ , thereby indicating a difference

did exist in student satisfaction levels between students residing with only biological parents compared to those not residing with only their biological parents, at the middle-school level. This should cause concern as increasing numbers of students reside with adults other than their biological parents (Wallerstein & Blakeslee, 1996). Parents need to be aware of student satisfaction with school. In addition, school districts need to remain cognizant of declining levels of student satisfaction with school-related activities.

The findings revealed students residing with only their biological parents were happier with school, compared to students not residing with only their biological parents. One possible explanation is students who live with only their mother and/or father may receive increased attention from their parents and spend more time with school-related activities (Cotton & Wikelund, 2001). When families are blended, due to the divorce, separation, or death of a parent, a period of time exists when the focus of a parent's attention is not on his or her biological child, but on the new relationship, the new partner and her or his children (Lightfoot, 2004). This is an important consideration for all adults raising an adolescent, because it provides a unique vantage point into the life of a student. Parents need to prioritize their time to embrace new relationships while remaining cognizant of the perceptions of their own children. Parents who maintain focus on their student and her or his school-related activities may witness increased levels of happiness with school-related activities. This insight offers a possible explanation as to why there is a difference in student satisfaction with school of students residing with only biological parents compared to those not residing with only biological parents.

*Research Question Two: What is the Relationship Between Parental Involvement in Education and Student Satisfaction with School-Related Activities?*

The focus of the second research question was the relationship between parental involvement in the education of middle-school students and the students' satisfaction with school-related activities. The results indicated a positive relationship between parental involvement in education and student satisfaction with school-related activities. The results also indicated students who resided with only their biological parents possessed higher levels of satisfaction with school compared to students who did not reside with only their biological parents. A significance level was established at a level of  $p=0.05$ , thereby indicating there was a relationship between parental involvement in education and students' satisfaction with school, at the middle-school level.

This finding is consistent with Epstein's (1996) study in which a positive relationship exists between parental involvement and academic success. Students' attitudes are fragile and subject to change. When a family structure changes, students are placed into a transitional state of life (Wallerstein & Blakeslee, 1996). The support system for the student in transition, primarily parents and step-parents, impacts how the student will adapt to her or his new surroundings. This study revealed how students residing in an intact family unit were better equipped to maintain a positive attitude, and possessed higher levels of satisfaction with their parents' involvement in their education and with their school.

These results indicated a positive relationship exists between parental involvement in education and student satisfaction with school-related activities. One



possible interpretation of these findings may be that biological parents involve themselves with school-related activities at increased levels, compared to other adults who live with a child (Volkman, 1996). This may be an important consideration for adults residing in the home of a student, and a charge to become involved with school-related activities in a manner deemed appropriate by the student.

### *Connection to Students*

This study confirms the work of Bronfenbrenner (1979), Cotton and Wikelund (2001), and Lightfoot (2004), for students residing with only their biological parents. They believe student behaviors can be described as more positive in nature when parents are involved. This group of students self-reported increased levels of happiness towards school. However, the group of students who do not reside with only their biological parents is inconsistent with the work of Bronfenbrenner (1979), Cotton and Wikelund (2001), and Lightfoot (2004), due to lower levels of happiness reported by these respondents. This latter group provides a new vein of inquiry to the extant literature – the influence of non-biological parental involvement in education on student satisfaction with school-related activities.

Students' satisfaction with school is determined by students through their own evaluation of satisfaction with teachers, fellow students, school work, student activities, student discipline, decision-making opportunities, school buildings, supplies and upkeep, school-related communication, and forms of parental involvement.

Again, this is important for it reinforces the need to communicate openly and

effectively with students, to flush-out appropriate ways for adults to involve themselves in the life of a student.

This study complements the work of Epstein (1996) regarding the relationship between student attitudes and the ability to embrace change. Epstein argues students who possess positive attitudes are better equipped to embrace change in their personal and academic lives. This study revealed students residing with only their biological parents possessed higher levels of satisfaction with school, and a relationship between the residence of the student, the student's satisfaction with school, and the effect on overall student attitude was implied. With this in mind, adults need to engage in rich discourse with students, to establish acceptable forms of parental involvement with school-related activities.

#### *Connection to Parents and Other Family Members*

The findings for students residing with only their biological parents are consistent with Volkman's study (1996), which explored the relationship between parental involvement in school activities, parents' perceptions about classroom practices, and students' education. These students possess higher levels of satisfaction with school, and stated they were happy with how their parents were involved with their education. The findings for students not residing with only their biological parents are inconsistent with Volkman's research. These students possess lower levels of satisfaction with school, and stated they were unhappy with how their parents were involved with their education. One possible explanation is the potential disconnect between some step-parents and their step-children. In order to be successful, parents and

step-parents must remain cognizant of their impact on the perceptions of their middle-school student.

Results of this study also confirmed the work of Lehman & Repetti (2007), revealing a relationship between the residence of a student and satisfaction with school. Students residing with only their biological parents self-reported increased levels of happiness towards the nine subscales of satisfaction with teachers, fellow students, school work, student activities, student discipline, decision-making opportunities, school buildings, supplies and upkeep, school-related communication, and forms of parental involvement. Students who did not reside with only their biological parents self-reported increased levels of unhappiness regarding the subscales. Again, the impact of the residence of a student on satisfaction with school was observable from the results of this study. This can be interpreted as a cry for help from all students – a request for help with school-related activities such as homework, attendance at parent-teacher conferences, and extra-curricular activities.

Student satisfaction with teachers and parental involvement in education were positively related at a significance level of 0.01. Students residing with only their biological mother or father self-reported a higher satisfaction level with teachers, compared to students who did not reside with only their biological parents.

Student satisfaction with fellow students and parental involvement in education were positively related at a significance level of 0.01. Students who did not reside with only their biological parents self-reported lower satisfaction levels with fellow students, compared to students residing with only their biological mother or father.

Student satisfaction with school work and parental involvement in education were positively related at a significance level of 0.01. Students residing with only their biological mother or father self-reported a higher satisfaction level with school work, compared to students who did not reside with only their biological parents.

Student satisfaction with student activities and parental involvement in education were positively related at a significance level of 0.01. Students who did not reside with only their biological parents self-reported lower satisfaction levels with student activities, compared to students residing with only their biological mother or father.

Student satisfaction with student discipline and parental involvement in education were positively related at a significance level of 0.01. Students residing with only their biological mother or father self-reported a higher satisfaction level with student discipline, compared to students who did not reside with only their biological parents.

Student satisfaction with decision-making opportunities and parental involvement in education were positively related at a significance level of 0.01. Students who did not reside with only their biological parents self-reported lower satisfaction levels with decision-making opportunities, compared to students residing with only their biological mother or father.

Student satisfaction with school buildings, supplies, upkeep and parental involvement in education were positively related at a significance level of 0.01. Students residing with only their biological mother or father self-reported a higher

satisfaction level with school buildings, supplies, and upkeep, compared to students who did not reside with only their biological parents.

Student satisfaction with school-related communication and parental involvement in education were positively related at a significance level of 0.01. Students who did not reside with only their biological parents self-reported lower satisfaction levels with school-related communication, compared to students residing with only their biological mother or father.

The work of McDonough (1995) was supported by this study and the positive relationship exhibited between parental involvement in education and student satisfaction with school. However, an inconsistency existed if the student did not reside with only her or his biological parents. Students residing with adults other than their biological parents revealed lower levels of satisfaction with school, compared to those who resided with only their biological parents. This re-affirmed the need for parents and school staff to remain cognizant of the impact of a change to the family structure on student satisfaction with school, and to maintain open lines of communication between all stakeholders in the education of a student.

This study supported Elkind's (2001) proposal for the training of parents to show respect for their students and how to use listening strategies. Elkind believes the respect shown by parents to students creates measurable increases in communication. The lower levels of student satisfaction with school could be offset by training for non-biological parents. This is an important aspect to consider when schools provide training sessions for parents and guardians on communication strategies between adults and adolescents.

The findings from this study were partially consistent with Griffin's (1996) work on the emotional and physical involvements of parents in the education of their student. Griffin reported parental involvement in education is positively related to student outcomes. This study was consistent with Griffin's work for students residing with only their biological parents, with higher levels of satisfaction with school reported by respondents. However, the findings from this study were inconsistent for students not residing with only their biological parents, who self-reported lower levels of satisfaction with school.

This study also complemented McLaughlin and Shields (1987) work on students' interests. They believe parents who take the time to show interest in the education of their student will reap the benefits, and peace of mind of knowing, they have done their part in helping to ensure a successful academic career for their student. The biological parents may have a natural connection to build on, and may account for the increased satisfaction with school levels. Students residing with non-biological parents self-reported lower satisfaction levels – reinforcing the need for increased information on how adults can invest time into the education of their student, in an appropriate manner.

Adding to the work of Reeder & Sowers (2002) on family literacy, biological and non-biological parents can reinforce the need for connections with students – possibly using literacy as a vehicle to begin conversations. Family literacy begins when adults illustrate the importance of reading to all students in their home. This facilitates families' communication levels on a daily basis, and may open lines of communication

between non-biological parents and students. These open lines of communication may increase levels of satisfaction with school for some students.

Findings from Henderson and Berla's (1995) research were supported by this study, which addressed the need for a comprehensive approach to educating students. The high levels of student satisfaction with school, as reported by students residing with only their biological parents, demonstrated the benefits to education witnessed by the work of many into the lives of a few. A parent who works together with their student increases student satisfaction with school. Students not residing with only their biological parents may see increased levels of satisfaction with school if the adults in their home invested time in a manner consistent with students' needs.

Steinberg's (1996) research on indicators of student success was complemented by this research study. Students residing with only their biological parents self-reported higher levels of satisfaction with parental involvement regarding communication between parents and teachers. Higher student-satisfaction levels with teachers were also revealed by this same group of students. Students not residing with only their biological parents revealed lower levels of satisfaction with teachers. This is important because it reinforces the need to maintain open lines of communication between students and all stakeholders in the education of a student.

Kindlon and Thompson's (2000) research on the relationship between a mother and her children was reinforced by the findings from this study. Their research reveals a strong connection between biological parents, specifically the biological mother, and the child. This connection may naturally complement needed support for the education of a student. Respondents residing with only their biological parents self-reported high

levels of satisfaction with parental involvement in their education – a finding consistent with Kindlon and Thompson's work.

The argument made by Lightfoot (2004), who believes when mothers invest their time into the education of their students, student achievement increases, was supported by this study. The higher level of satisfaction with school revealed by this study informed and complemented Lightfoot's research for students residing with only their biological parents. LeMenestrel's (1999) study, on relationships between fathers and their children was also supported by the findings from this study. LeMenestrel reveals the benefits to children from positive relationships with their fathers, and how a father's involvement affects a child's social, cognitive, and academic development. This reaffirms the need for men to become and remain involved, at appropriate levels, with the children in their home.

#### *Connection to School Leaders and the Community*

Evidence was provided for the argument stating students who reside with only their biological parents may be more satisfied with school, may be more comfortable communicating with teachers, and may be more capable of having a positive relationship with peers. Using cooperative learning strategies, teachers can fortify relationships between students. The successful implementation of these groups requires the creation of positive rapport between group members, and the presence of a group leader – a student with a positive attitude about school and the ability to communicate effectively with peers and the teacher (Mattingly, Prislín, McKenzie, Rodriguez, & Kayzar, 2002).



This study reinforced the work of Perlstein (2003), and Wright and Willis (2004) regarding the relationship between parental involvement in education and student achievement for students residing with only their biological parents. Higher satisfaction levels regarding homework were exhibited by students residing with only their biological parents. Students who did not reside with only their biological parents self-reported lower satisfaction levels – a finding which revealed the need for increased research on the relationship between non-biological parental involvement in education and student satisfaction with school.

### *Connection to Theory*

The ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) served as a theoretical framework to help comprehend findings. According to this theory, the family and child are embedded within many systems, with each influencing the other. The ecological systems theory states all systems interact, and each is unique and purposeful. Study findings supported, and are supported by, this theory. This study found student satisfaction with school was related to parental involvement in education. This study also revealed there was a difference in student satisfaction with school of students residing with only biological parents and those not residing with only biological parents. These findings illustrated how outer systems influence inner systems in the ecological systems theory. The community members and superintendent create and implement policy which in turn affects the manner in which a school district conducts business. These policies impact classroom practices and extra-curricular events surrounding school-related activities. The manner in which teachers and parents

communicate is also impacted by increased security measures inhibiting the spontaneous involvement of parents with school events, especially those occurring during regular school hours and inside school buildings. This negatively impacts the potential connections between parents and students occurring during these activities, which in turn affects communication between adults and children. This break-down in communication can lead to the decreased levels of satisfaction with school, findings revealed in this study.

### Implications of Study

A challenge exists for school districts to identify factors which positively impact levels of student achievement, satisfaction with school, student connection to school, and graduation rates. In order to increase the number of students graduating from high school, school districts need to proactively understand which variables positively impact student satisfaction levels with school, and connections to school, for students. Developing programs for parental involvement in middle-school can provide support for the development of the skills, knowledge, and connections necessary to be successful at high-school levels. An understanding of student satisfaction with school, and the perceptions students hold, is afforded by the results of this study.

### *Implications for Parents and Other Family Members*

The implications of this study include a possible need for parents to become increasingly aware of the potentially negative effects on student satisfaction levels, stemming from a disruption in the primary, intact family unit. This research study illustrates the benefits for students residing with only their biological parents. As

parents contemplate making life-changing decisions affecting all members of the family, they need to remain cognizant of the children in their households, and long-lasting effects that separation and/or divorce can have on their children, especially if either parent plans to remarry and/or cohabitate with other adults (Wallerstein & Blakeslee, 1996).

### *Implications for School Leaders and the Community*

The implications of this study may affect many levels of school leadership, including teachers, principals, superintendents, and community members. Teachers need to educate themselves about the living situations of the students in their classrooms, as much as the confidentiality and privacy laws permit them to do so. Knowledge of which students reside with only their biological mother and father can be used to create a platform to build a successful, collaborative classroom. Principals need to be aware of the relationship between parental involvement in the education of middle-school students and students' satisfaction with school. Superintendents need to remain cognizant of the issues impacting their school district, especially in the area of student satisfaction with school. As the federal government increases the expectations for graduation, and the number of students expected to graduate from high school, school leaders need to be diligent in addressing the at-risk population of students in schools (Kashani, et al., 1998). Implementing programs to increase levels of student satisfaction with school can help to offset the trend emerging from this research study – a finding of only one in three students are satisfied with school. School districts and community members possessing information from this research study can unite to form

a mission and vision statement driving programming changes for their schools.

Stakeholders in the education of the students can offer assistance to increase levels of student satisfaction in school in many forms. Programs designed to increase connections between students and schools may increase student-satisfaction levels for students of all ages. Although the school district and the community in which the school district resides cannot control where their students reside, it can create programs to assist in opening the lines of communications between students and schools, facilitate increased connections between students and schools, and increase levels of student satisfaction with school – regardless of where they reside.

As school leaders strive to increase graduation rates, they need to remain cognizant of the work of Kashani, et al. (1998), who believe increasing connections to school for students will increase levels of satisfaction with school. School leaders need to communicate with parents to be sure they understand the scope and expectations of the environment and culture of the school. School leaders must also communicate with other stakeholders to share the mission statement of the district. Failure to connect students to school may result in decreased levels of satisfaction with school for the students, and decreased graduation rates for the district.

### Critique of the Study

#### *The Methodological Tool*

The study is limited by its design. Study variables were not directly manipulated, and results were observed from existing groups. The study is limited because a convenience sample was employed. The study is also limited since the use of

one survey instrument may limit findings – multiple instruments would assess multiple aspects of the issue.

### *The Role of the Researcher*

The study is limited because the researcher was once a teacher at the school. This relationship could have impacted the willingness for respondents to complete the survey instrument. The high return rate of completed-survey instruments may not accurately represent the overall population, limiting the generalizability of the study.

### *The Data Analysis*

This study is limited because the data used came from only one population, and the data analysis was conducted by only one individual. The population's level of diversity does not accurately represent the general population of the world, country, or state in which the study was conducted. A racial make-up of 90% White students is inconsistent with the general population of the world. The subjectivity which cannot be avoided when a single person is involved, also limits the findings of this study. Ideally, a team of experts should be utilized to re-calculate and report on the findings from this research study. These steps will increase the generalizability of the findings.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

This study analyzed the relationship between parental involvement in education and student satisfaction with school. The study also looked at the relationship between students residing in homes with adults other than their biological parents and student satisfaction with school. Differences by grade-level, gender, race, and residence were

also examined. Finally the study analyzed what factors have the greatest impact on student satisfaction with school.

Since all participants were students at one Midwest middle-school in Michigan, this study could be conducted in different schools, in different locations in the state and/or country. Since some facets of student satisfaction with school may be impacted by the culture of the community surrounding the school, the results of the study may vary by region.

Future research must also include more ethnic diversity as well. This study examined students from three different grade-levels, and five different race categories, from one Midwest middle school. However, the sample was still purposive versus random in nature. The students who were asked to participate in this research study had a racial make-up of predominantly White students. Future research must be conducted to include data offering a stronger, more realistic representation of the general population of middle-school students.

This study found a relationship between parental involvement in the education of middle-school students and the students' satisfaction with school. Additional studies could be conducted to determine what factors contribute to levels of student satisfaction with school. It is possible other factors, such as grade-point average or membership in extra-curricular activities, impact levels of student satisfaction with school-related activities. Integration variables between family members could also be explored.

The study results prove a relationship between students residing in homes with adults other than their biological parents and student satisfaction with school. Additional studies could be conducted to determine what factors contribute to this

relationship, and possibly more importantly, what parents and schools can do to increase levels of student satisfaction with school, when students do not reside with only their biological parents. Again, it would be interesting to understand if other factors, such as grade-point average, age, or class standing affect this relationship.

The study was conducted at a single point in time. In all likelihood, students' satisfaction with school will vary over time. Additional studies could be conducted to determine what impact an increase in time of study and/or student age has on levels of student satisfaction with school. A longitudinal study would be required to study how parental involvement in education and students' satisfaction with school vary over time. Enhancement of the extant literature will occur if additional studies are completed surrounding the relationship between parental involvement in education and student satisfaction with school.

The student satisfaction score was measured using the Student Satisfaction Survey developed in 1985 by Neal Schmitt and Brian Loher for the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) at the University of Michigan (NASSP, 2007). Student satisfaction measured with another instrument would assure measures of student satisfaction are consistent. The IDS, developed by the researcher, could be expanded to collect data on specific family structures and members of families for students who do not reside with only their biological parents. Understanding if there is a relationship between student satisfaction with school and specific family members would add to the extant literature surrounding family structures, parental involvement, and student satisfaction with school.

Given the looming crisis in public education, school districts need to plan for the large percentages of students who do not reside with only their biological parents and therefore, based on the findings of this research study, possess lower levels of satisfaction with school. School districts need to recognize the mean student-satisfaction scores, of students who did not reside with only their biological parents, as an alarm bell resounding with full force and vigor. If schools are to increase the number of students graduating from high school each year, they must react purposely and consistently to the results of this study.

In order to help identify shortcomings with student satisfaction with school, it is important to note that this study found a positive relationship existed between the principal at this school and almost all students, regardless of the residents of the student. This person may be the key ingredient in bringing all groups together, to increase levels of student satisfaction with school-related activities.

### Conclusion

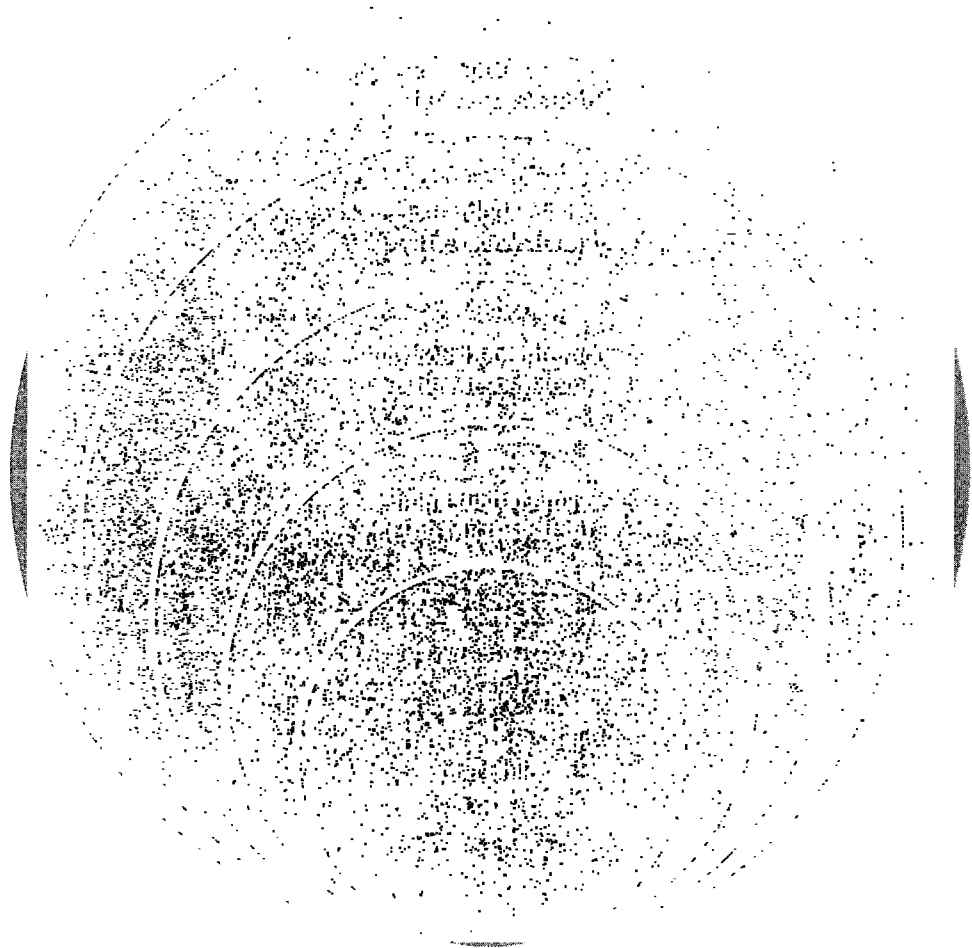
Conclusions for this study are biological-parental involvement in education and family structure was significantly related to student satisfaction with school. A key factor contributing to student satisfaction with school was if the student resided with only her or his biological parents. This divided the population into two groups. The group of students who resided with only their biological parents demonstrated higher levels of satisfaction with school. The majority of these students self-reported higher levels of satisfaction with parental involvement in their education. The group of students who did not reside with only their biological parents demonstrated lower levels



of satisfaction with school. The majority of these students self-reported lower levels of satisfaction with parental involvement in their education.

## APPENDICES

APPENDIX A  
THE CONCEPTUAL MODEL



## APPENDIX B

### WRITTEN PERMISSION FROM PRINCIPAL



Jonathon Gould is allowed to conduct research, for partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership from Central Michigan University, at Bay City Western Middle School.

The research will be in the form of a survey administered to students in grades six, seven, and eight, during the Students Achieving More (SAM) classes.

The survey will be administered during the months of February or March, 2009.

Signed this \_\_\_\_ day of January, 2009

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Dr. William Tithof  
Principal  
Western Middle School

APPENDIX C

PARENTAL PERMISSION FORM



Dear Parent or Guardian:

To gain valuable insight into how parental involvement in education is related to student satisfaction with school, I would like to survey your student.

Your student will be given a survey during their Students Achieving More (SAM) class that will take no more than 10-15 minutes to complete. There will be no identifying information on the survey. The responses will be anonymous, and completion of the survey is completely voluntary. Any student choosing to complete the survey will be given a coupon for a free small French fry.

**Jonathon Gould, a 1987 graduate of Western High School, former 8<sup>th</sup> grade mathematics teacher at Western Middle School, and doctoral candidate at Central Michigan University will be conducting this research.** A summary of results will be made available upon request.

If you do **NOT** want to have your student complete the survey, please send this letter back with your student before February 15, 2009. Please print your first and last name, your student's first and last name, and then sign your name below.

**Your student will not be given a survey to complete.**

**THANK YOU IN ADVANCE FOR YOUR TIME AND SUPPORT**

Sincerely,

_____ Date _____	_____ Date _____
Jonathon Gould	Dr. William Tithof
Doctoral Candidate	Building Principal
Central Michigan University	Western Middle School

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I, \_\_\_\_\_, (Parent/Guardian's printed first and last name)  
request that my student \_\_\_\_\_ (Student's printed first and last  
name) does **not** complete the survey. \_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent/Guardian's Signature).

APPENDIX D  
INSTRUCTIONS FOR SURVEY



Instructions for the Student Satisfaction Survey

Please read the following passage out-loud to students before handing-out surveys:

*“Good morning. Today you will be completing a survey regarding different levels of satisfaction you have with the school, and how you feel about your parents’ involvement with school. It’s essential that you answer all questions honestly.*

*Completing the survey is completely optional. If you choose not to complete the survey, simply turn it face down on your desk, and sit quietly. For any student who chooses to complete a survey, a coupon will be given to you for a free small French fry.*

*Once you receive a survey, please do NOT write your name, or any other identifying information. Using a number two pencil, simply darken-in the appropriate response for each question. When complete, turn the survey face down on your desk, and remain seated. I will collect all surveys when the entire class is finished.*

*The scale you will use ranges from a “1” – Very Unhappy to a “5” – Very Happy. Please mark any question you are uncertain of with a “6” – “I don’t know how I feel about this, or I don’t know how to respond to this statement” Thank you in advance, and please take your time”*

When all surveys are completed, collect and place them into the large envelope provided, and seal it. The researcher, Jonathon Gould, will collect all envelopes from you in person before the end of the day. Thank you for your time!

## **Addendum to the STUDENT SATISFACTION SURVEY**

### **Information Data Sheet**

Completion of the data sheet or survey is completely voluntary. If you choose not to complete the data sheet or survey, simply return the blank survey to your teacher. Please **DO NOT** write or sign your name on this survey.

#### ***Directions***

This survey has a number of statements which may describe situations at your school. For each statement mark only one answer on this form.

**Please place an “X” in only one box for each category below:**

**Grade Level:** ☐ 6<sup>th</sup> Grade      ☐ 7<sup>th</sup> Grade      ☐ 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

**Gender:** ☐ Male      ☐ Female

**Race:** ☐ White      ☐ Hispanic      ☐ African-American

☐ Asian-American      ☐ Multi-Racial

**Do you reside with your biological parents (Mother and Father)?** ☐ Yes      ☐ No

## STUDENT SATISFACTION SURVEY



Completion of this survey is completely voluntary. If you choose not to complete this survey, simply return the blank survey to your teacher. Please DO NOT write or sign your name on this survey.

### *Directions*

This survey has a number of statements which may describe situations at your school. For each statement mark only one answer on this form.

**Use the scale below to select the answer that best describes how you feel about each item:**

- 1= "I am *very unhappy* about this"
- 2= "I am *unhappy* about this"
- 3= "I am *neither happy nor unhappy* about this"
- 4= "I am *happy* about this"
- 5= "I am *very happy* about this"
- 6= ~~"I don't know how I feel about this, or  
"I don't know how to respond to this"~~



Key: I am      1 = Very Unhappy  
                   2 = Unhappy  
                   3 = Neither Happy nor Unhappy

4 = Happy  
 5 = Very Happy  
 6 = Don't Know



### STUDENT DISCIPLINE

24	How safe I feel at school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
25	How well students behave in class.	1	2	3	4	5	6
26	How well students behave in the school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
27	How well school rules are enforced.	1	2	3	4	5	6
28	How well students do what is expected, without being told.	1	2	3	4	5	6
29	How I feel, in general, about student discipline in my school.	1	2	3	4	5	6

### DECISION-MAKING OPPORTUNITIES

30	The importance of meetings that students are invited to attend.	1	2	3	4	5	6
31	How much opportunity students have to comment on courses that are offered.	1	2	3	4	5	6
32	How much influence the student council has in suggesting student events.	1	2	3	4	5	6
33	How well school administrators listen to student ideas.	1	2	3	4	5	6
34	How I feel, in general, about my opportunity to make decisions at my school.	1	2	3	4	5	6

### SCHOOL BUILDINGS, SUPPLIES, & UPKEEP

35	How easy it is for me to use the school library.	1	2	3	4	5	6
36	How good the books and other materials are in the school library.	1	2	3	4	5	6
37	How well the school grounds are kept clean.	1	2	3	4	5	6
38	How well the school buildings are kept clean, and in good repair.	1	2	3	4	5	6
39	How well classroom supplies and materials help me learn.	1	2	3	4	5	6
40	How happy I am, in general, about the buildings and supplies at my school.	1	2	3	4	5	6

### COMMUNICATION

41	How easy it is for me to find out about new and important things at school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
42	How easy it is for me to talk to teachers outside of the classroom.	1	2	3	4	5	6
43	How much I am told about what is happening at the school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
44	How much time I spend talking with other kids about classes and activities.	1	2	3	4	5	6
45	How easy it is to talk with the school principal or other administrators.	1	2	3	4	5	6
46	How I feel, in general, about relating to people and things at my school.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Key: I am

- 1 = Very Unhappy
- 2 = Unhappy
- 3 = Neither Happy nor Unhappy
- 4 = Happy
- 5 = Very Happy
- 6 = Don't Know



#### TEACHERS

1	How well teachers understand my problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2	How often teachers tell me I do good work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3	How much teachers tell me when I am having trouble.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4	How much teachers help me with my homework.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5	How much teachers make me want to learn new things.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6	How much my teachers seem to enjoy teaching.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	How I feel, in general, about my teachers.	1	2	3	4	5	6

#### FELLOW STUDENTS

8	How easy it is to make new friends at this school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9	How often students help each other on school projects.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10	How students treat each other.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11	The kinds of students who go to my school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12	How I feel, in general, about other students who go to my school.	1	2	3	4	5	6

#### SCHOOL WORK

13	The choices I have in picking classes.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14	How much my classes challenge me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15	The number of tests I have.	1	2	3	4	5	6
16	How much my school work is exciting.	1	2	3	4	5	6
17	The amount of homework I have.	1	2	3	4	5	6
18	How I feel, in general, about my classes and schoolwork.	1	2	3	4	5	6

#### STUDENT ACTIVITIES

19	The number of sports teams at my school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
20	The number of school events in which I take part.	1	2	3	4	5	6
21	How much students can plan and take part in school events.	1	2	3	4	5	6
22	The number of social events at my school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
23	How I feel, in general, about student activities at my school.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Key: I am      1 = Very Unhappy      4 = Happy  
                  2 = Unhappy      5 = Very Happy  
                  3 = Neither Happy nor Unhappy      6 = Don't Know



#### PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

47	How much my parent(s) help with homework.	1	2	3	4	5	6
48	How often my parent(s) attend parent-teacher conferences.	1	2	3	4	5	6
49	How much my parent(s) volunteer at school activities.	1	2	3	4	5	6
50	How often my parent(s) attend school functions.	1	2	3	4	5	6
51	The amount of time my parent(s) spend each week helping me to learn.	1	2	3	4	5	6
52	How much my parents communicate with other parents at my school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
53	How I feel, in general, about my parents involvement with my education.	1	2	3	4	5	6

#### OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH SCHOOL

54	How I feel, in general, about my school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
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